

Intercontinental Press

combined with **inprecor**

Vol. 16, No. 10

© 1978 by Intercontinental Press

March 13, 1978

USA 75¢

UK 30p



The U.S. coal strike, the most important test of strength in the American class struggle in thirty years, will have

immense repercussions for the wave of class battles now clearly on the horizon. See p. 295.

Behind the Showdown in American Coalfields

Why Carter Wants Castro Out of Africa

Smith's Gamble on 'Majority Rule'

By Ernest Harsch

After several months of negotiations, Rhodesian Prime Minister Ian Smith and three prominent Black figures signed an accord in Salisbury March 3. The document will supposedly result in an end to white political control and in the establishment of a largely Black regime by the end of the year. Also agreed to were the terms for an interim coalition regime, in which Smith will remain prime minister.

The three Black figures who signed the accord were Chief Jeremiah Chirau, a government-backed tribal figurehead, and two Zimbabwean nationalist leaders, Abel Muzorewa and Ndabaningi Sithole.

Smith's decision to bring Muzorewa, Sithole, and Chirau into a coalition regime and to promise "majority rule" by December 31 represents a significant gamble on his part, made under intense pressure from the Zimbabwean masses and under the threat of an upsurge that could sweep away the entire structure of white domination.

Smith's hope is that the inclusion of some well-known Black figures in the administration will sufficiently disorient the African masses to allow the preservation of many of the white minority's social and economic privileges, even under an eventual "Black" regime. Muzorewa's participation will be especially important in this regard, since he has demonstrated his mass support within the country on a number of occasions.

Smith is likewise seeking to divide and weaken the entire Zimbabwean nationalist movement. Playing on the rivalries and aspirations for power of the main nationalist leaders, he has offered the prospect of significant governmental posts to Muzorewa and Sithole, while excluding Joshua Nkomo and Robert Mugabe, who are allied within the Patriotic Front. Smith would like to see nothing better than Muzorewa and Sithole trying to mobilize their followers to defend "their" government from the Patriotic Front guerrillas.

In signing the accord, both Muzorewa and Sithole have made significant concessions to the white minority.

According to the agreement, the interim regime is to be composed of an executive council and a ministerial council. The executive council, which is to decide overall policy by consensus, will be composed of Smith, Muzorewa, Sithole, and Chirau. Each cabinet post in the ministerial council is to be shared by a Black and a white minister. In the context of a white-

dominated civil service, this ensures effective white control over all the cabinet posts, especially the crucial ones overseeing the police and military. At the same time, Smith will remain in office and the existing white-dominated Parliament will continue to function.

Under these conditions, the elections that are scheduled to be held will hardly be democratic.

The new Parliament that is slated to take power December 31 will include twenty-eight white seats out of 100, giving the whites effective veto power over any amendments to the new constitution,

The La Mon House Bombing in Northern Ireland

By Gerry Foley

On February 17, a Provisional IRA bombing operation on the outskirts of Belfast went awry. The intention had been to force evacuation of the La Mon House restaurant, which is frequented by pro-British Protestants, and to inflict property damage.

However, the premises were not clear before the explosive device went off. Twelve persons died in a wave of flames. The incident had a particularly strong impact on public opinion, since the restaurant was a family dining-out place, and many children were present. Ultraright proimperialists distributed pictures of charred corpses in the Protestant neighborhoods.

In its February 25 issue, *Republican News*, the Belfast weekly paper reflecting the views of the Provisionals, published a statement in the name of the republican movement. It said:

The Irish Republican Army admits responsibility for the bombing operation in La Mon House in which twelve innocent people died. There is nothing we can offer in mitigation bar that our inquiries have established that a nine minute warning was given to the RUC [Royal Ulster Constabulary]. This was proved totally inadequate given the disastrous consequences.

We accept condemnation and criticism from only two sources: from the relatives and friends of those who were accidentally killed, and from our supporters who have rightly and severely criticised us.

The statement, however, defended the strategy that led to the La Mon bombing:

which require seventy-eight votes for passage. The constitution, moreover, is to include clauses providing for prompt compensation for any expropriated white property, as well as other white privileges (the white minority now owns 80 percent of the country's wealth and about half of its land).

If this setup is actually put into effect, it will be a far cry from what the Zimbabwean masses have been fighting for—real Black majority rule and an end to all vestiges of white supremacy and privilege.

Smith's gamble is a risky one, however. The African population may not accept for long his version of "majority rule." And any upsurge of the Zimbabwean masses could easily blow Smith's fragile coalition apart.

These uncertain prospects are the main reason for the caution expressed by both Washington and London toward the Salisbury agreement. So far, they have continued to press for the Patriotic Front's inclusion in any accord, but have at the same time hinted at possible recognition should Smith's scheme appear workable. □

Republican supporters while critical are, however, politically mature and remain solidly behind the armed struggle. . . .

To defeat the might of the interfering British Government the nature of their presence here dictated the method of struggle to be an economic bombing campaign. . . .

Had there been no bombing campaign all those Brits concentrated in city and town centres and manning road checkpoints throughout all suburbs would be redeployed in repressing Republican ghetto areas. In damages the campaign has caused the Brits hundreds of millions of pounds. The death toll has been high, both among civilians and IRA personnel (over 60 Volunteers have been killed-in-action).

But the political effects of the bombing campaign have been productive. It has created insecurity and confusion among Unionists and helped break up the loyalist monolith, brought down Stormont [the Belfast parliament], made and makes the Six-Counties internally ungovernable and has made government under British direct rule difficult and often impossible. The world hears about the Six-Counties and knows that it is not normal.

The Provisionals' defense of their bombing campaign was politically quite weak. The La Mon House bombing and the reaction to it demonstrated what is fundamentally wrong with this approach. In the framework of such a campaign, accidents of this type are absolutely inevitable. This is far from the first.

Since incidents of this type can be and have been repeatedly exploited by the imperialist propaganda machine, why should British commanders be in any hurry to get the Provisionals off the hook?

Every time the Provisionals leave a bomb in a public place, they place their political fate in the hands of the imperialists.

The claim that the bombings draw British troops away from the ghettos is simply nonsense. The British have to maintain far less troops in Northern Ireland now than they have in the past, precisely because the political results of the bombing campaign have been to reduce the mass struggle, which is what forced the British to send the troops in the first place.

The world, to be sure, hears a lot about the Provisional bombings. And it does get the message that the situation there is not "normal." But these incidents have not helped arouse international public opinion against the British military occupation.

The mass civil-rights demonstrations and ghetto uprisings of 1968-72 drew much more international attention than the bombings, and unlike them, inspired support for the anti-imperialist movement in Ireland.

The Provisionals' reference to their casualties is revealing. The tremendous sacrifices made for the sake of the military campaign make it difficult for them now to retreat from it.

In fact, the campaign of bombing "economic" targets (which can be anything it is easy to get at) with simply made but hard to control incendiary devices has the look of a desperate maneuver designed to convince the republican ranks and supporters that the guerrilla war is not fading and was not a failure.

In the past months the Provisional press has taken a turn toward a shriller and more dogmatic defense of "armed struggle" as a general principle. For example, for weeks, the newspapers that reflect the Provisional point of view have featured pictures of masked commandos, and have emphasized statements of groups outside Ireland specifically expressing support for the "armed" struggle. Likewise, they have begun to run direct and indirect attacks on socialist groups that support the anti-imperialist struggle but criticize the tactics of the IRA.

The Irish anti-imperialist movement has already seen one republican organization take refuge in virulent dogmatism when it refused to recognize that its strategy had failed. That happened to the "Official" republicans in 1974-75.

It is to be hoped that the Provisionals will be better able than the "Officials" to learn from their mistakes and correct them. The lessons of the ten-year-long conflict in Ireland are clear. The military campaign of the Provisionals has led again and again to disastrous accidents and to defeats.

On the other hand, the mobilization of the masses of the oppressed people around opposition to imperialist and pro-imperialist repression has led to victories, the greatest victories the Irish people have won since the war of independence. □

In This Issue

Closing News Date: March 4, 1978

| | | |
|----------------------------|-----|--|
| AFRICA | 292 | Why Carter Wants Fidel Castro Out of Africa—by Ernest Harsch |
| USA | 295 | Behind the Showdown in American Coalfields —by Matilde Zimmermann |
| | 305 | College Drops All Charges Against Six Iranian Activists—by José G. Pérez |
| | 308 | Support Grows for Marroquin's Right to Asylum |
| JAPAN | 300 | CP Drifts Further to the Right —by Mutsugoro Kawasaki |
| NICARAGUA | 302 | The Beginning of the End for Somoza |
| SOUTH AFRICA | 303 | "Idleness" Outlawed |
| IRAN | 304 | Cracks Begin to Appear in Shah's Regime —by Ali Golestan |
| JAMAICA | 306 | "Democratic Socialist" Manley Cracks Down on Workers—by Sheila Malone |
| WEST GERMANY | 307 | Rise in Workers Struggles |
| CANADA | 310 | Why Protectionism Doesn't Save Jobs —by Richard Fidler |
| BRITAIN | 311 | Alan Thorne Under Attack at Leyland |
| IRELAND | 312 | Coalition Conference Against Repression —by Brian Lyons and Aileen O'Callaghan |
| PERU | 315 | "Democratic" Election on Military's Drawing Board—by Fred Murphy |
| FRANCE | 318 | Hugo Blanco's "Letter to My People" |
| | 319 | For an End to the Phony Dispute Between CP and SPI |
| NEWS ANALYSIS | 290 | Smith's Gamble on "Majority Rule" —by Ernest Harsch |
| | 290 | The La Mon House Bombing in Northern Ireland—by Gerry Foley |
| SELECTIONS FROM THE LEFT | 298 | |
| CAPITALISM FOULS THINGS UP | 309 | Riding the Rails to Disaster |
| FROM OUR READERS | 320 | |
| DRAWINGS | 296 | George Meany; 297, Arnold Miller; 306, Michael Manley—by Copain |
| | 304 | Shah Reza Mohammed Pahlevi—by Ivan |

Intercontinental Press, P.O. Box 116, Varick Street Station, New York, N.Y. 10014. Published in New York each Monday except the first in January and the third and fourth in August.

Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y.

Editor: Joseph Hansen.

Contributing Editors: Pierre Frank, Livio Mai-tan, Ernest Mandel, George Novack.

Managing Editor: Michael Baumann.

Editorial Staff: Jon Britton, Gerry Foley, Ernest Harsch, Fred Murphy, Susan Wald, Matilde Zimmermann.

Business Manager: Harvey McArthur.

Copy Editor: David Martin.

Technical Staff: Paul Devez, Ellen Fischer, Larry Ingram, Arthur Lobman, James M. Morgan, Sally Rhett.

Intercontinental Press specializes in political analysis and interpretation of events of particular interest to the labor, socialist, colonial independence, Black, and women's liberation movements.

Signed articles represent the views of the authors, which may not necessarily coincide with those of Intercontinental Press. Insofar as it re-

flects editorial opinion, unsigned material stands on the program of the Fourth International.

To Subscribe: For one year send \$24 to Intercontinental Press, P.O. Box 116, Varick Street Station, New York, N.Y. 10014. Write for rates on first class and airmail.

In Europe: For air-speeded subscriptions, write to Intercontinental Press, P.O. Box 50, London N1 2XP, England. In Australia: Write to Pathfinder Press, P.O. Box 151, Glebe 2037. In New Zealand: Write to Socialist Books, P.O. Box 1663, Wellington.

Subscription correspondence should be addressed to Intercontinental Press, P.O. Box 116, Varick Street Station, New York, N.Y. 10014.

Please allow five weeks for change of address. Include your old address as well as your new address, and, if possible, an address label from a recent issue.

Intercontinental Press is published by the 408 Printing and Publishing Corporation, 408 West Street, New York, N.Y. 10014. Offices at 408 West Street, New York, N.Y.

Copyright ©1978 by Intercontinental Press.

Why Carter Wants Fidel Castro Out of Africa

By Ernest Harsch

In his role as political chief of American imperialism, President Carter is trying to whip up hysteria against Cuba.

Using as a pretext the "danger" of Cuban involvement in African affairs, Carter began his bellicose denunciations in early November, when he called the presence of Cuban troops there "a threat to the permanent peace in Africa."

Carter's initial barrage was followed by a State Department pronouncement that the role the Cubans were playing in Africa could impede "the possibility of normalizing relations" between Washington and Havana. In the context of American imperialism's seventeen-year-old effort to strangle the Cuban revolution, this was an obvious threat to tighten the American trade embargo and give the green light to CIA plots to topple the Cuban government by assassinating Fidel Castro.

A number of Carter's top lieutenants also singled out Cuba for attack. Andrew Young, the White House's representative to the United Nations, charged December 4 that the Cuban involvement in Africa represented "a kind of new colonialism" that contributed to "the destruction and chaos of Africa." Two days later, speaking at the United Nations, he tried to tag responsibility for the repressive policies of some African states on the Cubans.

To give such charges a "factual" appearance, Carter's national security adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski, released a detailed study in November purporting to give an accurate breakdown of the Cuban military and civilian presence in sixteen African countries. The highest figures were listed for Angola, where 19,000 military personnel and 4,000 civilian advisers were said to be stationed.

The editors of the influential *New York Times* participated in this effort. Among other items, they published a map based on the National Security Council report on the front page of the November 17 issue.

The White House's anti-Cuban operation was stepped up in early February, focusing largely on Havana's assistance to the Ethiopian regime.

Unnamed "intelligence officials" claimed that Cuban pilots were in Ethiopia and that they were flying bombing raids against the Eritrean independence forces and against Somali units in the Ogaden desert region of Ethiopia, where local Somali guerrillas and regular Somali troops are fighting the Ethiopians for control. So many Cuban pilots were said to be in Ethiopia, in fact, that Soviet pilots

were supposedly required to replace them in the air defense of Cuba itself.

In separate news briefings February 24, Brzezinski and State Department representative Hodding Carter III claimed that there were about 10,000 Cuban troops in Ethiopia. Brzezinski charged that the Cubans were "engaged in combat activities" and that they were organized into two infantry brigades and one mechanized brigade. He also asserted that a Soviet general was "in direct command" of Ethiopian troops in the region of Harar, a major city on the edge of the Ogaden.

By March 2, Secretary of State Cyrus Vance was claiming that the number of Cuban troops in Africa as a whole had climbed to between 35,000 and 37,000.

The major capitalist dailies in the United States took an active part in this campaign. The February 15 *New York Times* editorially condemned the Cubans as "tools of Soviet imperial purposes" and "the world's foremost intercontinental force of mercenaries."

The editors of the *Wall Street Journal* followed suit February 23, calling the Cubans Soviet "shock troops" and taking the opportunity to argue for a bigger American military budget.

The Carter administration's attempt to arouse hysteria over the Cuban involvement in Africa breaks no new ground. It is simply a revival of the alarms raised by the Republican administration during the Angolan civil war of 1975-76. At that time, President Gerald Ford branded Castro an "international outlaw" and called his government a "regime of aggression." Castro's "crime" was to respond to an Angolan plea for help in beating off a military invasion mounted by the racist South African government.

As it has for many years, the Cuban government has stood up to American pressure and intimidation, refusing to concede its right as a sovereign power to conduct its own domestic and foreign policy.

Castro defended his government's sovereign rights December 6, stating, "If the issue of Cuban-American relations is placed in the context of Africa, the restoration of relations will not advance. We are not willing to enter into any kind of compromise on that."

Castro also pointed out that the administration's estimates of the number of Cuban advisers and troops in Africa were exaggerated and that in some of the countries

cited by Washington, such as Libya and Uganda, there were no Cuban military missions at all.

Reporting from Havana in the February 14 issue of the Paris daily *Le Monde*, correspondent Marcel Niedergang indicated that the recent figures released by Carter's aides on the number of Cuban combat units in Ethiopia may likewise be exaggerated. He reported that according to Cuban officials, Havana's assistance to the Ethiopian regime does not involve "the sending of large numbers of combat units to Ethiopia."

However, Ramón Sanchez-Parodi, the top Cuban envoy in Washington, admitted February 14 that there were some Cuban military units in Ethiopia. "We are not acting as an expeditionary force," he said, "but as advisers, technicians and troops."

And on March 2, Ethiopian head of state Lt. Col. Mengistu Haile Mariam conceded that some of the Cubans were serving with Ethiopian troops in combat zones: "The Cubans, who are renowned for shedding their blood anywhere, and at all times in genuine struggle and for the sake of principles, are standing alongside the Ethiopian people's defense forces on the front line."

Speaking in Havana December 24 before the National Assembly of People's Power,¹ Castro pointed out that Washington was exaggerating the Cuban presence in Africa "with a clear intent to blackmail."

Castro continued:

Yet if the U.S. Government were to embark on a policy of blackmail and pressure against us . . . maintaining its blockade as an ignoble and criminal weapon against our people; if the U.S. Government believes that in order for relations to improve our people must give up their principles, then in the same manner that in the past we fought against five presidents of the United States, we will now fight against the sixth.

Castro also scored the hypocrisy of Washington's denunciations:

What moral basis can the United States have to speak about Cuban troops in Africa? What moral basis can a country have whose troops are on every continent, that has, for instance, over 20 military bases in the Philippines, dozens of bases in Okinawa, in Japan, in Asia, in Turkey, in Greece, in the FRG [Federal Republic of Germany], in Europe, in Spain, in Italy and everywhere else? What moral basis can the United States have to use the argument of our

1. The bulk of this speech was reprinted in two parts in the February 6 and February 13 issues of *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.

troops being in Africa when their own troops are stationed by force on Panamanian territory, occupying a portion of that country? What moral basis can the United States have to speak about our troops in Africa when their own troops are stationed right here on our own national territory, at the Guantánamo naval base?

Castro could also have easily exposed the fraudulent nature of Carter's protestations against foreign "interference" in Africa by citing Washington's record there as well.

It was American imperialism that for many years backed the Portuguese colonialists' efforts to hang on to their "overseas territories" in Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau. It was Washington and its European allies that provided considerable military and economic assistance to the racist white minority regime in South Africa. As recently as last October, just before the denunciations of Cuba were stepped up, Carter had Andrew Young veto proposed United Nations economic sanctions against the apartheid regime.

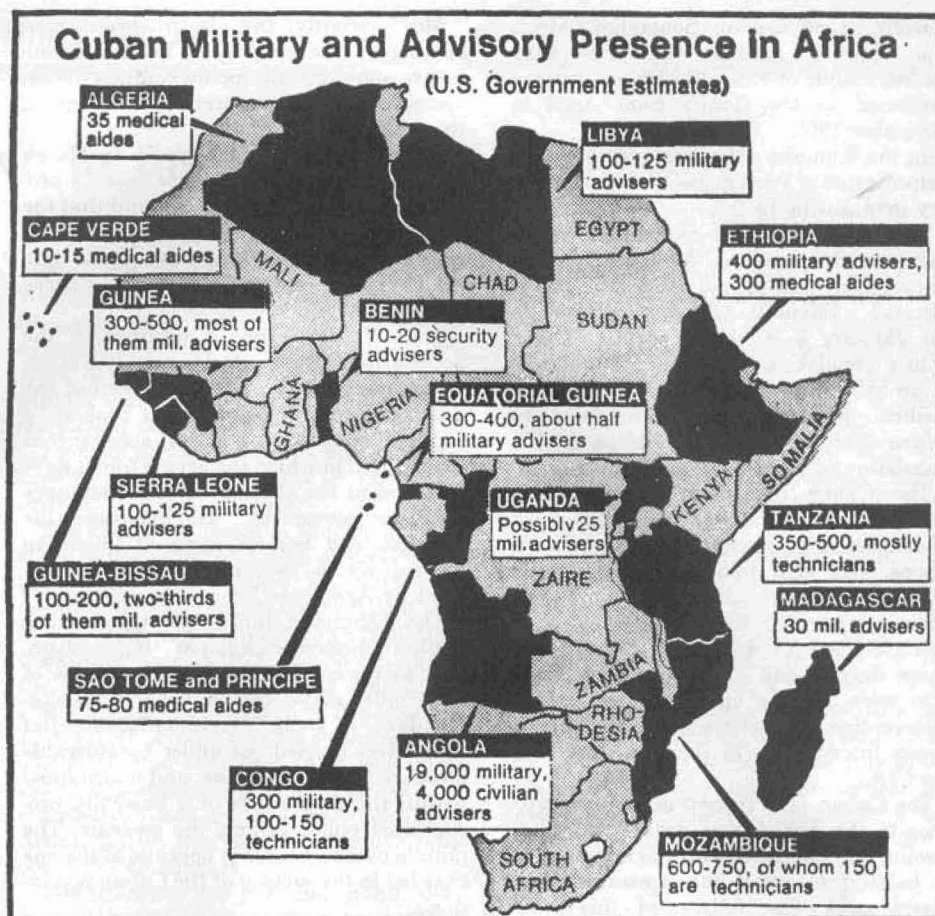
It was the Carter administration that tacitly approved the French airlift of 1,500 Moroccan troops to Zaïre in early 1977 to help put down an uprising in that country's province of Shaba. Nor has Carter condemned the existence of French military bases in Senegal and Djibouti, the presence of scores of French military "advisers" in other African countries, and the recent French bombing raids against Saharan freedom fighters.

In Ethiopia itself, Carter has conveniently ignored the fact that Washington provided massive military assistance to the central government in Addis Ababa for more than two decades, under both Selassie and the present "socialist" military junta. From 1954 to 1977, this included about \$350 million in American arms and at times up to 6,000 U.S. "advisers."

Even after the American military assistance was sharply reduced in early 1977, West German police advisers continued to aid the Ethiopian regime and Israeli counterinsurgency experts helped its war effort against the Eritreans, Somalis, and other oppressed nationalities. In fact, the Israeli assistance was reportedly given with American encouragement (see *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*, February 27, p. 229).

The fact is that Washington, for a number of reasons, favors the maintenance of Ethiopia's present borders, if at all possible. But in view of the Ethiopian junta's instability and its failure thus far to contain the massive unrest in the country, Washington has chosen for the moment to keep its direct ties with Addis Ababa to a minimum.

In this light, Carter's strident condemnations of the Cuban involvement in Africa can be seen largely as an effort to create a justification and cover for Washington's own intervention on that continent, as well



Map published on front page of "New York Times" November 17, 1977, as part of White House propaganda drive against Cuban "buildup" in Africa.

as a pretext for stepped-up pressure against Cuba itself.

But at the same time, the outcry does betray a certain concern over Castro's intentions and over the uncertainty of where and when Cuban forces may next appear.

This has been reflected in the tone of the White House warnings to Havana, which have been much sharper than those issued to Moscow. And in a dispatch from Nairobi, Kenya, correspondent Michael T. Kaufman reported in the November 27, 1977, *New York Times* that many Western and African diplomats believe that the Cuban involvement in Ethiopia "may be arousing fears completely out of proportion to the current or potential Cuban military role."

One reason for this concern on the part of the imperialists dates back to the beginning of the Cuban revolution itself.

In the context of CIA- and Pentagon-directed attacks against the new Cuban workers state, such as the imposition of a trade embargo and the abortive Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961, the Cuban leadership realized that the surest way of defending the revolution was to extend it throughout Latin America. To this end, Castro and Che Guevara gave material

and political backing to revolutionists in other Latin American countries, in open defiance of Washington.

Unfortunately, the method of struggle Castro and Guevara urged their compatriots to follow—guerrilla warfare—was by its nature extremely ineffective. They failed to pursue a Leninist strategy of building revolutionary parties rooted in the masses and capable of leading them to power. As a result, their efforts met with failure, and Guevara himself was killed in Bolivia in 1967 during a guerrilla campaign.

Nevertheless, the alarm these efforts generated among the American imperialists was great.

The Cuban involvement in Africa also began during this period. Cuban support was given to numerous anti-imperialist struggles, including those in Algeria, Mozambique, Angola, and Guinea-Bissau. Commander Pedro Rodríguez Peralta, today a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba, was imprisoned by the Portuguese colonialists for several years for his assistance to the liberation fighters there.

In the former Belgian Congo (now called Zaïre), Guevara himself joined the guerrilla forces of the National Council of the

Revolution of Gaston Soumaliot, which was fighting against the imperialist-backed regime of Moïse Tshombe. Guevara remained in the Congo from April to December 1965.

In the Republic of Guinea, a Cuban unit helped repel a Portuguese-backed mercenary invasion in 1970.

In numerous African countries, Havana has provided medical, industrial, educational, agricultural, and other assistance. "Indeed," David B. Ottaway reported in the January 5 *Washington Post*, "Cuba, with a population of less than 10 million, is probably now providing more doctors, medical personnel and technicians to Africa than is the United States, with a population of more than 200 million."

The Cuban opposition to imperialist intervention in Africa reached a high point in October 1975, when thousands of Cuban troops were sent to Angola to help the MPLA repel a direct intervention of South African troops on the side of the FNLA and UNITA.² In doing so, Havana was again defying the American imperialists, who were backing up the South African intervention and who were involved in a covert intervention of their own through the CIA.

The Cuban (and Soviet) material assistance to the MPLA was decisive in overcoming the South African aggression and in helping to resist the pressures from Washington. The failure of this joint American-South African operation subsequently spurred the African masses in Zimbabwe, Namibia, and South Africa itself to redouble their efforts to end white minority rule over their own countries.

However, the Cuban involvement in Angola also had its negative side. Despite its radical-sounding rhetoric, the MPLA is a procapitalist force. The Cubans have said nothing about its neocolonialist policies, and have in fact helped it to maintain a "left" cover. They also failed to criticize the MPLA's attacks on the working class and its repression against Maoists, Trotskyists, and other political currents critical of the MPLA regime. The Cubans have helped train the MPLA's police and military forces.

These negative aspects of Cuba's foreign policy go back a number of years as well. For instance, before the military coup in Brazil in 1964, Havana adopted a favorable attitude toward the regime headed by João Goulart, a bourgeois populist. Havana took a similar stance toward the Allende regime in Chile and the Peruvian military junta of Velasco Alvarado, as well as toward a number of regimes in Africa.

Most recently, the Castro government has been making especially favorable comments about the Ethiopian military junta, known as the Dergue, and about Mengistu, its chairman.

Following a visit to Ethiopia in March 1977, Castro said that there was "a profound revolution" in Ethiopia and that the military leaders "have made an anti-feudal revolution while working at the same time for socialism." He called Mengistu a "true revolutionary."

Raúl Valdés Vivó, a member of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba, described the process in Ethiopia in a recent book as "a people's revolution, a mass, spontaneous Revolution, to which the armed forces gave direction in the absence of a revolutionary party or movement." He dismissed the Eritrean and Somali national liberation movements as "secessionist forces encouraged by Arab reaction and imperialism."³

The Ethiopian junta has taken some limited measures against imperialism, such as the nationalization of a number of imperialist-owned companies and the closing down of some U.S. installations. But these were carried out under considerable pressure from the masses, and maintained within the framework of a basically procapitalist policy despite the pressure. The junta's overall course is opposite to the one that led to the victory of the Cuban revolution.

Despite its claim that it favors "Marxism-Leninism," the Dergue has banned strikes and has taken other actions against the working class. It has also sought to suppress any opposition to or criticism of the regime, from either the right or the left, through extremely repressive measures.

The Dergue's policies are especially reactionary in regard to its efforts to maintain the present Ethiopian state, in which the Amharas have traditionally been the oppressor nationality. The Eritreans, Somalis, and other oppressed nationalities have been struggling against this Amharic domination for years.

The imperialists and their Arab allies may now be trying to maneuver for position with the Eritreans and Somalis, but it is with the intention of containing their struggles. Washington, too, fears a fragmentation of the Ethiopian state, for an Eritrean or Somali victory could encourage oppressed peoples in other countries.

Whatever their intentions, the Cubans' current political and material support for the Dergue does not advance the class and national liberation struggles in the Horn of Africa. Moreover, their favorable por-

trayal of the junta helps it to maintain its radical image and sows confusion among revolutionists.

Nevertheless, the Carter administration is quite worried about the Cuban involvement in the Horn of Africa. First of all, their presence there could complicate Carter's efforts to maneuver among the various regimes and forces. And in line with the State Department's claims that the Cubans are acting as Soviet surrogates, Washington may also be concerned that their involvement could help Moscow increase its diplomatic influence.

In view of the widespread unrest in the Horn and the sudden shifts in international alignments there, it is also possible that a future turn in the situation could pit the Cuban forces directly against American imperialist interests.

In Washington's view, the Cuban presence in the Horn cannot be separated from Havana's involvement on the African continent as a whole. In the current period of mass unrest from one end of Africa to the other, the imperialists fear that the Cuban forces may serve to catalyze immense upheavals. In this sense, the Cuban involvement in Africa adds to the already widespread instability.

The State Department itself has intimated the existence of this fear. On November 17, 1977, a department representative declared, "We believe the presence of large numbers of Cubans in Africa is bound to have an unsettling effect and is a threat to peace in Africa."

Washington's fears about the Cuban presence in Africa—and its long-standing goal of overturning the gains of the Cuban revolution itself—point toward a revival of the policy of the mailed fist.

This was the case, for instance, during President Ford's pistol-swinging campaign against Cuban involvement in Angola. At that time, the Pentagon indicated that it was considering a naval and air blockade of Cuba and even a possible military attack.

No such threats have yet been publicly voiced by Carter, but the *Christian Science Monitor*, which has very good connections with the State Department, reported in its February 27 issue that various "counter-measures" were under discussion in Washington.

In the Horn of Africa itself, two serious threats of direct imperialist military intervention have already been made. In early February, two U.S. warships were sent to the Red Sea off the coast of Eritrea as a show of force. And on February 27, the French ambassador to the United States warned that French troops would "protect" the former French colony of Djibouti, which borders on both Ethiopia and Somalia.

These dangers of imperialist intervention in Africa—and against Cuba—cannot be brushed aside. Opponents of American aggression should remain on the alert. □

2. Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola); Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola (Angolan National Liberation Front); União Nacional Para Independência Total de Angola (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola).

3. *Ethiopia: The Unknown Revolution*. Serialized in the January 22, January 29, February 5, and February 12 issues of the weekly English-language edition of *Granma*, the organ of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba. Pp. 14, 19.

Behind the Showdown in the American Coalfields

By Matilde Zimmermann

As the most important test of strength in the American class struggle in thirty years, the nationwide coal strike will have immense repercussions, particularly in determining the relationship of forces in the wave of class battles now clearly looming in the United States.

On March 5 coal miners rejected by a margin of more than 2 to 1 the contract negotiated by United Mine Workers President Arnold Miller and the coal operators. As the strike entered its ninety-first day, President Carter was preparing to announce what form of government strike-breaking would be invoked against the miners.

The mine owners provoked the strike with an open challenge to rights and benefits won by the United Mine Workers of America in previous decades. This represented a new stage in the employers' current offensive, the first attempt since the mid-forties to break the strength of a major industrial union.

In their drive to increase profits and improve their international competitive position, the American capitalists have been attempting to reduce significantly the standard of living of working people in the United States. They did not take on the entire working class at once, however. Nor did they start with the strongest sector.

First to suffer were those already on the bottom of the heap. Black unemployment soared. Both economic cutbacks and attacks on legal rights were used to drive women back into the home or confine them to the worst jobs.

The capitalists engaged in a few direct confrontations with trade unions, but they chose the weakest unions with the most treacherous leadership: public employee unions that could be pitted against the communities of the oppressed nationalities in cities like New York and Atlanta; craft unions rendered unfit for any kind of struggle by decades of orientation toward preserving white male job-trusts.

Eventually, however, the bosses had to take on the industrial working class and its unions. There is a limit to the amount of additional profit that can be squeezed out of the Black or female worker who lives near the subsistence level even during the best of times. The next significant increase in profits could come only through eliminating some of the benefits in wages and working conditions won by the big industrial unions in past struggles.

The employers began to talk, not just about "holding the line" in contract negoti-

ations, but of taking things away. As Wayne Horvitz, chief government labor mediator, described the situation: "Management is testing the relationship to see what it will bear. The employers believe that for many years they have given away more than they should across the table to the unions and that perhaps this is a good time to get some of it back" (*Wall Street Journal*, January 27, 1978).

The employers chose to launch the new stage of their offensive with a challenge to the United Mine Workers. The union had declined in membership, from half a million working miners in the 1940s to 160,000 working miners in 1977. The percentage of the annual coal production mined by UMW members dropped from 70 percent in 1974 to 50 percent just three years later. The union had been torn apart by a bitter election campaign in which the issues were not clearly posed and the union president, Arnold Miller, was returned to office without majority support.

The operators, on the other hand, were in a relatively strong position and had the backing of the entire ruling class in their drive against the miners. Carter's energy proposals called for doubling the current coal output of 680 million tons by 1985. This would mean fantastic profits if the owners could tame the militant miners and force productivity up. In addition, major coal users were sitting on three- to four-month stockpiles of coal, and the operators were confident that the miners would come crawling to the settlement table long before supplies ran low.

A victory against the UMW would immensely strengthen the bosses' hands for the rail-contract talks later in 1978 and the auto and trucking contracts to be hammered out in 1979.

The Role of the UMW

This was especially true because of the role the UMW has played historically in the American labor movement and its reputation for class militance. As Harry Patrick, former national officer of the UMW said, "you're getting the granddaddy of them all when you get the Mine Workers."

There were two traditions in the UMW that gave the bosses particular trouble, both related to the use of the strike weapon. The first was "no contract, no work," which meant that the union did not give up its only way of bringing pressure to bear during negotiations. The second was the inviolability of a picket line. The

operators complained bitterly about the "wildcat" strikes that had cost them 2.5 million work days in 1977. A few pickets, with or without union authorization, could shut down any mine and, if more pressure was needed, spread the strike to other mines.

There had been two changes in the UMW during the 1970s that would assume increasing importance as the strike developed.

In 1972 a reform movement called Miners for Democracy had thrown out the corrupt machine of Tony Boyle and won certain fundamental rights within the union, most importantly the right of the membership to vote on a contract.

At the same time, the composition of the UMW was changing dramatically. With the entry of tens of thousands of returned Vietnam veterans into the mines, the average age of miners dropped in a few years from the mid-50s to the early 30s.

Issues in the Strike

The operators went into the contract negotiations demanding that the union retreat on all fronts: safety measures, working conditions, cost-of-living protection, vacations, and pensions. But their one overriding goal was to end wildcat strikes. The *Wall Street Journal* of February 21 quoted one industry representative as saying the right to fire miners who set up or honor picket lines "is an absolute must for us."

Mining is the most dangerous industrial work in the United States. Two thousand miners have been killed on the job in the last decade. Every week, seventy-seven miners die from black lung disease (pneumoconiosis).

The contract signed by the UMW in 1974 included a complicated grievance and arbitration procedure for resolving disputes over safety practices. The miners, for whom safety is a life or death question, have had to bypass these procedures and simply shut down mines to force owners to correct dangerous violations. Miners know that it takes an average of forty-four weeks to process a grievance, and less than that many seconds for an explosion to close off a tunnel. The backlog of cases is such that some three-year-old grievances have not yet been resolved. Of the 400 grievances that went to arbitration in UMW District 30, very few were won by the union.

In addition to the right to strike, miners demanded the refinancing of their health

and pension plan. For thirty years, the UMW had had a model medical plan, financed by the employers (through royalties on every ton of coal mined) but controlled by the union. This provided free "cradle to grave" health care and led to the establishment of health clinics throughout the coal areas. The benefits were sharply cut in July 1977, when miners were forced to assume up to \$500 of their own medical expenses.

Further, the operators said the whole fund was jeopardized by the way "wildcat" strikes cut into production, and they insisted that the plan would not be refinanced until the "wildcat" problem was resolved. The miners bitterly resented having their health fund held hostage against their right to strike, and swore they would stay out as long as it took to win back full medical coverage.

When the strike began December 6, the operators discounted miners' claims to be prepared for a long strike. "They'll tell you they can stay out," the *New York Times* of December 15 quoted one industry representative as saying. "But let the strike roll around to the first of the year, and you'll hear a different story."

The reality turned out to be quite different. On March 6, as President Carter readied government strikebreaking machinery for use against the miners, all UMW mines in the east—and many non-union mines as well—had been shut tight for exactly three months.

A Grave Miscalculation

American capitalists clearly misjudged the mood of the miners. In years of chipping away at the workers' standard of living, they had never encountered resistance on this scale.

The scope of the operators' demands outraged the miners and stiffened their resistance. Thirty-seven-year-old miner Douglas Wriston was quoted as saying the companies "want it all. They're trying to grab for everything, and the union won't stand for it."

The strike demonstrates how even partial union democracy can be a powerful weapon in the hands of the workers. From the first day of contract talks, the negotiations were dominated by the fact that any settlement reached would have to be approved by the men and women who actually do the mining. Talks were broken off several times when news of concessions by union negotiators leaked to the miners and provoked an angry response.

On February 6 union President Arnold Miller came to terms with the operators organized into the Bituminous Coal Operators Association. Miller unveiled a contract he described as "excellent" and "by far the best agreement negotiated in any major industry in the past two years." The UMW bargaining council overwhelmingly voted

it down, refusing to risk the certain wrath of the miners by even passing it on for a vote. One member characterized Miller's "excellent" settlement as a "ball and chain" contract.



GEORGE MEANY: Says he "won't criticize" government strike breaking efforts.

Having failed to starve the miners into submission, the mine owners and the White House stepped up their political campaign to isolate, demoralize, and confuse the strikers.

Critical energy "shortages" were declared in the six Midwestern states most dependent on coal for electric power. The strikers were blamed for layoffs of other industrial workers, and more massive layoffs were threatened. It was predicted that 2.5 million noncoal workers would lose their jobs by mid-March if coal were not moving again, and that the most affected states would have to cut power use by 50 percent.

Street lights were turned off in many Ohio cities. Children in Indiana had to wear overcoats in their freezing classrooms. Schools, businesses, and places of entertainment closed or reduced their hours of operation. Federal air-pollution controls were lifted in Ohio, Indiana, and Kentucky.

The purpose of the "crisis"—and projections of worse to come—was to turn other workers and the population as a whole against the miners.

Intimidation and violence against the miners—a feature of the strike from the beginning—was escalated. The governor of Indiana mobilized 600 national guardsmen to ride shotgun on shipments of scab coal.

Dig Coal With Bayonets?

Carter weighed his strikebreaking options. He threatened to invoke the Taft-

Hartley law to force the miners back to work for an eighty-day "cooling off" period. Everyone assumed, however, that the miners would refuse to obey such an injunction. The Taft-Hartley law had been invoked three times against the coal miners in the past and ignored in each instance.

Carter could seek congressional approval for government seizure of the mines. But the miners were not likely to resume work without a contract just because an American flag was hoisted over entrances to the mines—especially when the profits were being turned over to the mine owners. As forty-nine-year-old West Virginia miner Robert Rumberd said, "They can send the Army up here but they won't ever bring coal out of Cabin Creek." (Quoted in *Time* magazine, February 27.)

By the last week of February, efforts to settle the strike were being organized directly by the White House, with both the mine owners and the union leadership staying in the background. Carter's secretary of labor, Ray Marshall, worked out a settlement with a coal company not represented by the coal operators association, the Pittsburgh and Midway Coal Company (P&M), employing less than a thousand UMW miners. This contract was passed off as a great victory for the miners and accepted by the UMW bargaining council, in a split vote, as a model for an industry-wide contract.

The operators association put on a show of refusing to approve the P&M contract, calling it "total capitulation" to the "unreasonable demands" of the miners.

Carter went on national television February 24 to "congratulate" the miners for their "significant achievement," saluting them for their "dedication to justice in the mines."

When this appeal got the response it deserved in the coal fields, Carter revealed his real position: "Ratify or else." The gun he was holding to the miners' heads was immediate use of one or more forms of direct government strikebreaking.

The new contract, far from being a "capitulation" to the miners, was a dressed-up version of the rejected February 6 settlement. Some of the secondary roll-backs of miners' rights were deleted. Among the features dropped were the attempts to introduce Sunday work, incentive pay, and \$20-a-day fines for workers who participate in or even honor "wildcat" pickets.

The basic features of the "ball and chain" contract were retained, however. These include the right to fire a worker "who has picketed or otherwise been actively involved in an unauthorized work stoppage," and replacement of the health fund with commercial medical insurance under which miners would pay up to \$700 a year.

Miners, young and old, resented the contract's discrimination against retired

miners. Those who retired before January 1976 would receive pensions averaging \$275 a month—only half what those who retired later would get. "They built this union," said miner Robin Davis about the pensioners. "We've got to keep it strong, and if we're to do that, we've got to think of them" (*New York Times*, February 26).

Top UMW officials went on an all-out campaign to sell this contract to the miners. During the week before the vote, mining towns were bombarded with television and radio ads extolling the contract, produced by an expensive public-relations firm and paid for with miners' union dues.

Arnold Miller's role in trying to force an inadequate contract down miners' throats has earned him general hatred among the rank and file. A petition drive to recall Miller is under way, and 4,000 of the required 13,500 signatures have already been presented. In UMW District 2 in Pennsylvania, all sixty-three locals have called for Miller's resignation.

As the strike progressed, Miller tended to recede into the background, detested by both sides. He couldn't deliver to the bosses the "labor peace" they demanded—although he tried. And he couldn't deliver to the miners the contract terms they had demanded at the 1976 UMW convention. The strike became more and more a head-on confrontation between the coal miners on one side and the coal operators and White House on the other.

No new leadership emerged during the course of the strike that could pose a political alternative to Miller's class-collaborationist line. What was lacking was not militant action, class-struggle instincts, or contempt for Carter and other capitalist politicians. Those came across in nearly every television and newspaper interview with coal miners. What was lacking was an alternative leadership within the union that could point the way toward challenging the bosses in the political arena—for example, by running labor candidates for office and raising the need for a labor party.

Advice From George Meany

The role of the bureaucrats in the rest of the labor movement was if anything more scandalous than Miller's. George Meany, head of the major trade-union federation, the AFL-CIO, openly called on Carter to break the strike.

"If I was President," Meany said, "I would seize the mines and lay down conditions that the miners can accept." He encouraged Carter to invoke the Taft-Hartley law against the miners, saying "we won't criticize him."

United Auto Workers President Douglas Fraser, who often poses as a "progressive" alternative to the archreactionary Meany, agreed that "a government takeover for a brief period would be acceptable."

Other union officials simply ignored the

strike. This despite the fact that there is widespread admiration for the miners' fighting spirit among working people in general and unionists in particular. Broad



UMW CHIEF ARNOLD MILLER: Angry miners demand his resignation.

solidarity actions would have cut right through the government's attempt to isolate the miners by blaming them for energy "shortages." These have not occurred on the scale that was possible and necessary.

Response of the SWP

Members of the Socialist Workers Party often played a significant role in initiating the solidarity actions that have taken place. The Socialist Workers Party National Committee, meeting February 23-26, voted to step up miner support work and make it the central task of the party. Party members have been successful in getting solidarity resolutions and contributions voted by their unions and in organizing labor support actions.

Many SWP branches around the country are now announcing candidates for state and federal office in the November 1978 elections, and these candidates are making defense of the miners their central campaign activity. A new SWP branch was formed in Morgantown, West Virginia, in the heart of the coal country, in mid-1977. The Young Socialist Alliance has helped build miners support committees and rallies on college campuses.

A special campaign has been launched to get the socialist newsweekly, the *Mil-*

itant, to miners and other industrial workers. The *Militant* devotes many pages each week to telling the miners' side of the story and drawing the political lessons of the strike.

The political impact of the strike is already being felt far from the coal mines. New York City recently began contract talks with unions representing 200,000 city workers, after warning that sharp new cuts would be imposed. Union negotiators are admitting that the coal strike puts new limits on what they can give away. "We'll have to come back with something," said Matthew Guinan, president of the Transport Workers, "or we'll end up like Miller."

The chief of the sanitation union, John DeLury, warned that union heads were going to have problems delivering what they did in the past. "We'll have wildcats. We're like the coal miners. You can't control it. Our men will resent it. They will swing out and punch."

The news media tries to emphasize the uniqueness of the coal miners: their militant history, fierce independence, geographical isolation, the dangerous work they do, their readiness to strike. The implication is that much more than distance separates the Appalachian hollows from the streets of Detroit. In particular, class struggle attitudes—which cannot be denied in this case—are portrayed as something peculiar to diggers of coal.

The most conscious elements of the capitalist class are certainly not confused by this propaganda. They know that class hatred is not something that comes from breathing mountain air and coal dust. They know that the miners are not the only workers with the power to shut down important sectors of the U.S. economy.

"They try to say we're not important," said West Virginia miner Gary Fleming. "Or that we're dumb. But all we did was stop working and they all started screaming, 'national emergency.'"

American capitalists miscalculated the resistance of the coal miners. Now that resistance is something they will have to take into account when they start to try to drive through—as required by the state of the capitalist economy—their attacks on workers in rail, auto, trucking and steel. □

Kremlin Ups Price of Oil

Moscow's trading partners in Eastern Europe who want to continue importing Soviet oil now pay 21 percent more than they did a year ago.

According to a report from Tanjug, the official Yugoslav news agency, Eastern European governments are currently paying the equivalent of \$11.72 a barrel for Soviet oil, up from \$9.66 a year earlier.

Soviet oil prices to its sister workers states are based not on the cost of production but on a five-year average of world oil prices.

Selections From the Left

INFORMATIONS OUVRIERES

"Workers News," open forum for the class struggle, published weekly in Paris.

The February 15-22 issue includes a statement by expelled left-wing Socialist Party deputies on the new government in Portugal, which is based on a coalition of the SP with the bourgeois Social Democratic Center party.

The two deputies who issued this communiqué, Carmelinda Pereira and Aires Rodrigues, were leaders of the SP's Labor Commissions. At the November 1976 SP congress, along with the other leading union activists in the party, they tried to lead a fight against the antilabor policies of the Soares government.

Even before their final expulsion from the SP, the Labor Commission leaders were prevented from meeting in the party offices by police.

The statement says:

"Like the bulk of the Portuguese working people, we are opposed to an SP-Social Democratic Center government.

"In this parliament, there is a majority of SP and CP deputies, elected with a precise mandate (to defend and extend the gains of the working people and democratic freedoms). The inclusion in the government of a party such as the Democratic Center Union, whose leaders have always been characterized by the SP and CP leaders as 'the legitimate heirs of the old regime' is an act contrary to the will expressed by the immense majority of the Portuguese working people.

"We note that this government is not proposing a vote of confidence before it takes office, as is normal in a democracy. We cannot therefore vote against it, as we would do.

"Motions of censure have been proposed by the PPD [Democratic People's Party] and the CP.

"We think it is natural that the PPD, a party that represents the interests of capital and reaction and whose objective is to wipe out the gains won by the working people after April 25, states that it will not 'systematically oppose this government.' It is natural that it says it thinks this government is extremely fragile and that it is trying to prepare the conditions for forming a 'government of national salvation,' involving still stronger intervention by the president of the republic, even if it is necessary to dissolve this parliament for that purpose.

"The content of the PPD's motion of censure is clear. It is not trying to prevent the installation of this government. It reveals the real intentions of this party,

which are contrary to the interests of the Portuguese working people.

"The CP leaders are proposing a vote of censure at the same time that they oppose the alternative that flows from the presence of a majority of SP and CP deputies in this parliament, and the will of the workers and of their own members.

"The leaders of the CP oppose the formula of an SP-independents government [i.e., the previous all-SP government that included supposedly independent military officers].

"The CP leaders oppose an SP-CP government.

"In an editorial in *Avante*, the CP leaders said:

"The CP will not follow a confrontationist policy. Since it has not yet demonstrated what its policy will be, the SP-Social Democratic Center government enjoys the benefit of the doubt."

"We can conclude from this that the CP has not actually proposed a serious motion of censure against this government, which is constituted 'on the basis of a platform discussed among all social and political forces without discrimination' and under the aegis of the president, General Ramalho Eanes, as the CP itself suggested. . . .

"Therefore . . . we vote against the CP motion.

"Along with the Portuguese people, we favor a CP-SP government for solving the problems of the country, for the defense and extension of the gains of April 1974, for the defense of democratic rights, for socialism."



RED POWER

Official organ of the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (People's Liberation Front). Published monthly in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

The first issue, dated January 1978, includes the text of a statement by the Political Bureau of the JVP on the armed conflict between Vietnam and Cambodia:

"The Political Bureau of the JVP is deeply distressed to learn that a conflict regarding territorial boundaries has arisen between the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the Democratic Republic of Kampuchea, that the red forces of both countries are in a battle over this issue and that both countries are suffering losses as a result.

"The foreign policy of every socialist country should be based on proletarian internationalism. Any country which does not accept or act according to this principle is in the grasp of opportunism. This border dispute, which illustrates the petty-nationalism that socialist countries have fallen prey to, is causing great satisfaction

among imperialists and capitalists the world over.

"The border dispute between Socialist Vietnam and Democratic Kampuchea is one which has been foisted upon the people of both countries by imperialism. However important a role territorial boundaries may play in the relationship between socialist countries, any such conflict should have a collective solution, based on proletarian internationalism and mutual understanding. Yet, what has actually happened is far from this.

"The tendency that should, and does prevail in any transition to socialism, is that of the birth of large republics as a collection of nation-states. Therefore, we call upon these two countries in revolutionary solidarity to solve the current border dispute in the spirit of proletarian internationalism, rejecting all concepts based on petty-nationalism. We also express a hope that the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, the Democratic Republic of Kampuchea and the Democratic Republic of Laos, which we feel to bear so many economic, social, political and cultural features in common, will direct their energies to the problem of uniting and forming an Indo-Chinese Socialist Republic in the future."

rouge

"Red," revolutionary communist daily, published in Paris.

The February 8 issue reports on a news conference given in Paris by Vasile Paraschiv, an activist in the Romanian human-rights movement. Paraschiv was a signer of the letter by writer Paul Goma to the Belgrade conference, protesting violations of democratic rights under the Ceausescu regime. He visited France on a tourist visa.

Paraschiv said that he had two purposes in coming to Paris. One was to thank those in France who defended the persecuted antibureaucratic fighters in his country and to inform "French workers and their trade-union representatives" about the state of human rights in his country.

The other purpose was to get confirmation of his sanity by French psychiatrists. *Rouge* reported:

"Following the methods inaugurated by the Soviet bureaucracy, the mandarins in Bucharest have resorted to the political 'psychiatry' denounced at this press conference also by Dr. Ion Vianu, who was forced into exile because he opposed it.

"The diagnostic history of Vasile Paraschiv, confined on four occasions between 1969 and 1977, referred to 'paranoid psychopathology'; a 'classical persecution mania,' which is the charge made against all oppositionists; and a 'manic psychosis for

making constant political or economic demands.' . . .

"Could anyone believe that Vasile was mentally ill as he explained how he joined the Romanian CP in 1946?

"Beginning at the age of twelve, I experienced a hard life and exploitation by the bosses in Bucharest. The desire for freedom, justice, equality, and a better life for all workers led me to join the CP in 1946, at the age of eighteen.

"Twenty-two years later, I realized that the promises the CP made to the people had not been kept. . . . I decided on October 24, 1968, to leave the party. I sent Ceausescu a letter in which I explained that what made me break from it was the crimes of Stalin, revealed by Khrushchev in the Twentieth Party Congress, the crimes of the Romanian CP revealed by Ceausescu at the April 22, 1968, plenum, and the Romanian CP's lack of respect for its own principles. Another reason was the invasion of Czechoslovakia a few months earlier by Warsaw Pact troops.'

"Despite the repression, Vasile Paraschiv continues to declare himself a Marxist and socialist. . . .

"The most moving moment perhaps was when Vasile described the scene that took place in his factory last May 20. He had just come out of the psychiatric hospital and had come to collect his back pay. His mates on the job asked him why he had been held. He explained that a foreman and two workers in the factory had falsely accused him of bothering them. His mates decided to make personal statements that Vasile was perfectly sound in body and mind, and that the accusations against him were baseless.

"Warned by an informer, the CP factory leadership carried out a search. . . . There were a total of eighteen individual statements of solidarity from the fellow workers of Vasile Paraschiv, a socialist worker persecuted in Romania for trying to bring about an accord between the practice and the letter of the laws of his country and the principles of his party."

ΠΑΡΟΦΡΑΓΜΑ

"To *Odhophragma*" (*The Barricade*), reflects the views of the Greek section of the Fourth International. Published fortnightly in Athens.

The February 18 issue reports:

"The first issue has appeared this week of the journal *Gia ten Apeleutheorosi ton Gynaikon* (For Women's Liberation). It is being published by the Movement for Women's Liberation. This is the first time anyone has tried to publish a class-struggle feminist magazine in Greece. It is written by women for women. It is a symbol of the development of the women's movement in our country.

"It is a class-struggle magazine from the

standpoint of the questions taken up. There are articles on women hospital workers, housewives, girls in reform schools, as well as women who undergo repeated abortions. These questions are not treated simply as a number of different kinds of oppression but as one oppression expressed in various forms. As the editors say in their introductory article:

This is a class-struggle journal. That is not because it does not fail to take up relations between women and employers but because it does not limit itself to this. . . .

We will fight for the abolition of separate roles for the two sexes in the household and on the job, against the family, the relationships of production, against the system.

We are a feminist journal, because we do not fail to denounce a specific form of oppression. From this we draw the conclusions about how to fight against this form of oppression. We think that there is a need for an autonomous women's organization as well as for a class-struggle feminist journal.

Women should have their own autonomous forms of organization everywhere the workers movement is developing—in the workplaces, in the neighborhoods, and in the schools. This was explained by the women unionists in Varkeloni in the interview we had with them. The oppression of women means that all social relations among persons follow the distorted form they are given in the bourgeois family. These patterns are deeply inculcated in workers. As Trotsky said, socialism will have to be built with "a woman's eye."

rood

"Red," Flemish weekly paper of the Revolutionary Workers League, Belgian section of the Fourth International.

The February 17 issue reports:

"In its February 2 issue, *De Rode Vaan* [the paper of the Belgian Communist Party] published a sixteen-page supplement with long excerpts from the report by deputy chairman Claude Renard to the January 21 CP Central Committee plenum. The report was entitled 'The Communist Party of Belgium in the International Communist Movement.'

"After stressing the Belgian CP's solidarity with the Soviet Union, this report went deeper into three questions—internationalism, the relationship between socialism and democracy, and the relationship between anti-Sovietism and anti-Communism.

"The report and the resolution based on it that was adopted clearly represent an evolution in the standpoint of the Belgian CP. Thus, bureaucratic practices were frankly criticized:

"International solidarity does not oblige us to approve of bureaucratic deviations or to apologize for them, because such deviations do not simply limit democracy, they greatly distort it. To put an opponent of the regime in a mental hospital is not a limitation of democracy, it is an unforgivable act."

"From this the CP drew the following conclusion:

"In any case, we could not be convincing in our international policy—or in our political activity in general—without informing the working class of our opinion about the impasse of democracy in the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries."

Rood comments:

"For decades Stalinism subordinated the international Communist movement to the demands of the bureaucratic caste in the USSR. To this end, it created a caricature of living revolutionary Marxism that amounted to abandoning Leninism for the theory of 'socialism in one country.'

"Under the pressure of the new revolutionary period in the capitalist world, among other things, the crisis of Stalinism has revived discussion. Along with the reformist evolution of the CPs, which are following a course toward becoming attached to their own bourgeoisies, partial criticism has developed of bureaucratic degeneration. The Belgian CP, which dropped the concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat from its program in 1974 and struck out on the reformist road very early, has now joined the critical trend of 'Eurocommunism.'

"Naturally, this is taking place without a deepgoing critique of Stalinism ('the results of Stalinism do not explain everything,' the report says). This document also maintains the Stalinist conception of the Soviet Union. ('We see no reason to dispute the fact that today the Soviet Union has reached the stage of developed socialism.'). . . .

"Renard's report belittles the importance of the opposition in the workers states. It says:

"This hope [for an extension of democracy] is growing in the Soviet Union as well. But no one can deny that it is felt strongly only in restricted circles of the intelligentsia. A small minority of the intelligentsia is reacting to the abuses of the bureaucracy, and staging protests of a marginal character."

"However, the uprisings in 1953 in the German Democratic Republic, in 1956 in Poland and Hungary, in 1968 in Prague, and in 1970 in Poland were not only mass actions but actions primarily of the workers. . . .

"This report in the Belgian CP opens the debate, a debate that revolutionary Marxists have carried on since the birth of the Left Opposition led by Leon Trotsky in the Soviet Union. The CP has taken this position to improve its possibilities here in Belgium in view of the growing current in favor of socialist self-management. The discussion must be widened, to take up not just the nature of the opposition in the workers states but the most fundamental concepts of Marxism-Leninism as regards the measures for guaranteeing socialist democracy."

The Japanese CP Drifts Further to the Right

By Mutsugoro Kawasaki

TOKYO—A long-simmering crisis in the Japanese Communist Party erupted at the end of last year, when the leadership expelled Vice-Chairman Satomi Hakamada.

The JCP newspaper, *Akahata* (Red Flag), reported in its January 4 issue that Hakamada, a veteran activist who joined before World War II, was deprived of membership as of December 30, 1977, for "violating the party's disciplinary rules."

The truth was that CP Chairman Kenji Miyamoto discovered that Hakamada was writing an article, for publication outside the party, strongly criticizing the leadership and its policies.

Hakamada had already been removed from his post and suspended from the party for six months. This action, taken last April, barred him from attending the party's Fourteenth Congress in October, thus preventing him from standing for reelection.

The reason for the initial suspension, the JCP claimed, was that Hakamada had made criticisms of Miyamoto and other leaders both in private letters and at meetings with rank-and-file members and sympathizers.

The article that led to Hakamada's expulsion was published in the January 12 issue of the weekly *Shukan Shincho*, described by *Akahata* as an "anticommunist" magazine.

In his article Hakamada claimed that under Miyamoto's leadership the party was undemocratic and had abandoned the mass movement in favor of elections and party building [in the electoral arena].

This was the reason, Hakamada said, for the present stagnation of the JCP and the serious setback it suffered in the 1976 elections, when it lost twenty of its thirty-nine seats in the Lower House of the Diet (parliament).

In an interview in Tokyo's English-language *Mainichi Daily News*, Hakamada said that he submitted his article, entitled "Kenji Miyamoto, Comrade of Yesterday," in the full knowledge that his act violated party regulations.

He did so, he said, because he had been "deprived of the means of making criticisms inside the party." The statement is ironic, since Hakamada himself has taken an active part in purging dissenters from the party in the past.

The expulsion did not come as a complete surprise to those involved in Japanese politics, as the tensions in the Japanese CP have been evident for some time.

Growth and Stagnation of JCP

| Party | | |
|-----------------------|---------|--------------------------|
| Year | Members | Circulation of "Akahata" |
| 1961 (8th Congress) | 87,000 | 370,000 |
| 1964 (9th Congress) | 150,000 | 800,000 |
| 1966 (10th Congress) | 280,000 | 1,000,000 |
| 1970 (11th Congress) | 280,000 | — |
| 1973 (12th Congress)* | 300,000 | — |

| Youth Group | | |
|-----------------------|---------|----------------------------|
| Year | Members | Circulation of Youth Paper |
| 1970 (11th Congress) | 200,000 | 300,000 |
| 1972 (12th Congress)* | 140,000 | 230,000 |

| Seats in Diet | | |
|---------------|-------------|-------------|
| | Upper House | Lower House |
| Before 1968 | 1 | 4 |
| 1968 | 4 | — |
| 1969 | — | 14 |
| 1972 | — | 39 |
| 1974 | 13 | — |
| 1976 | — | 19 |
| 1977 | 9 | — |

*Latest figures available

Ever since the witch-hunt by General MacArthur during the American occupation of the late 1940s, the JCP's political line has been drifting to the right in search of a more "respectable" image.

This process has accelerated rapidly in recent years, making the JCP virtually indistinguishable from the centrist parties¹ and nurturing a growing crisis on both the rank-and-file and leadership levels. It was this crisis and the resulting stagnation of the JCP as a force in Japanese politics that produced the disaster at the polls in 1976.

Recent History of the JCP

Beginning in the latter half of the 1960s, the JCP underwent steady growth, both in the size of the party and its number of seats in the Diet. The relatively sudden drop in popularity at the polls, in the mid-

1970s, can be directly attributed to changes in its political line in response to the changing international political situation.

Before 1972 the war in Vietnam had a stimulating effect on the Japanese economy, especially as Japan did not have to bear any of the financial burden. During this economic boom, it was relatively easy for the JCP to win concessions from the bourgeoisie, and thus attract many followers to their reformist line.

However, as the Japanese anti-imperialist movement grew, and American withdrawal became a near certainty, the capitalists saw lean times ahead. So although Nixon's détente visit to China in 1972 took the Japanese bourgeoisie by surprise, they were quick to make the turn and line up behind Washington. The so-called Normalisation Pact was signed the same year, and was in effect an agreement for increased trade and peaceful coexistence between Japan and China.

The pact represented a big shift in Chinese foreign policy, and meant in practice that the CCP now supported the continued U.S. military presence in Japan as provided for in the Japan-U.S. Status of Forces Agreement and Security Treaty.

1. "Centrist" in this sense means between the working class and the bourgeoisie, such as the right wing of the Japan Socialist Party, the Democratic Socialist Party, and the Buddhist-inspired Komeito (Clean Government Party).

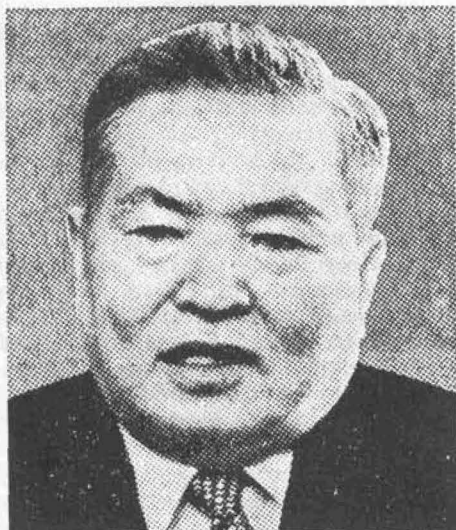
This shift moved China into line with Japan's centrist parties, and totally isolated the JCP, the only reformist current participating in the antiwar struggle. Consequently, the JCP hastily abandoned that struggle, and the strong anti-imperialist movement in Japan was virtually paralysed.

Soon after, the economic recession set in, and it became impossible for the JCP's increasingly conciliatory policies to win the working class the gains it had become used to—notably a regular annual wage increase in real terms. The pinch was too tight.

The development of the JCP from the mid-1960s up to then was based mainly on its influence in the large cities, mostly among the petty bourgeoisie and only to a limited extent among industrial workers. It had come to control, in coalition with the SP, the local governments of nearly all of Japan's large population centers, including Tokyo, Yokohama, Kyoto, Osaka, and Kanagawa.² However, when the political situation changed decisively in 1972-73, the JCP sank deeper into reformism instead of becoming more combative.

This shift was clearly reflected in the changes made recently in the party's ideological position and political practice. At the Thirteenth Congress in 1976, it officially abandoned the concept of "the dicta-

2. The reason they did not have more weight in the Diet was (and still is) owing to the disparity in the size of electoral areas in the cities and countryside. For example, the size of the Tokyo voting area was fixed just after World War II, when the city had a population of about one million. That population is now closer to ten million, but the constituency, and the number of representatives elected from it, are the same as thirty years ago. Each voter in the more conservative countryside therefore has between two and five times more "voting power" than a city dweller.



Mainichi Daily News

MIYAMOTO: "Comrade of Yesterday"?

torship of the proletariat" and renounced Marxism-Leninism as a way forward. It shifted from organizing and building the mass movement to emphasizing elections, party building, and increasing newspaper sales.

For example, it stopped supporting the struggles of local government employees, claiming that while they were indeed workers, they were also public servants and therefore should not strike. Similarly with teachers, the JCP began to say that because of their special "moral responsibilities," workers in education should not take action in support of their grievances.

In 1977, during the fishing-rights dispute over the 200-mile limit and the row with the Soviet Union over four of the "Kurile" islands north of Japan (occupied by the USSR during World War II), the JCP's line was totally nationalistic and practically the same as that of the conservative, ruling Liberal Democratic Party.³

In fact on all major issues since 1974, it has become impossible for voters to distinguish between the JCP and the centrist currents, as the party has withdrawn from one struggle after another and has become increasingly isolated from the workers' movement.

Immediately after the 1976 election defeat, at a special post-mortem meeting, Hakamada criticized Miyamoto for adopting these disastrous policies. Miyamoto defended the party line as being correct, and laid the blame for the election setback on the propaganda attacks launched by "anticommunist elements" (the bourgeoisie and the centrist parties), and on the rank-and-file members, who he said were not energetic enough during the election campaign.

This crisis and split in the leadership is clearly reflected in the rank and file of the party. At the present time, because of its disastrous policies, the JCP's influence in the labor movement is very weak. The party has lost about 130,000 members in the past ten years, and membership has not increased significantly, if at all, since 1973, when it was announced to be 300,000. No figures have been published since.

In most industries, the membership is divided into two camps—those who are willing to organise mass campaigns (usually older members who joined the party when it was more radical) and those loyal to the leadership (mostly younger or newer activists who were attracted to, or at least educated under, the present line).

But although the strength and credibility of the JCP in the working class is at a low ebb, there are mass struggles taking place. This trend is quite clear, although the actions are still spontaneous and uncoordinated.

3. See "CP, SP Help Revive Claim to Japan's Lost Empire," in *Intercontinental Press*, December 20, 1976, p. 1822.



Mainichi Daily News

HAKAMADA: Expelled for voicing criticism.

The task for revolutionists in this situation is to unify and spread those struggles, to ensure that the combative layers of workers do not dissipate their energies fighting isolated struggles that will lead to defeat and disillusionment.

The Japan Revolutionary Communist League (JRCL—Japanese section of the Fourth International) aims to intervene to coordinate these militant layers, particularly around the struggle against the New Tokyo International (Narita) Airport at Sanrizuka.

The Present Character of the JCP

The JCP claims to be an independent CP, similar in nature to the Vietnamese and Eurocommunist parties. Although it is true that it now follows neither Moscow nor Peking, there are a number of important differences between it and the Eurocommunists. For one thing, their internal bureaucracy is much stronger and more monolithic.

For example, a few months before the Thirteenth Congress in 1976, the Central Committee announced that it would start publication of an internal discussion document—a surprising move. The first issue of this bulletin consisted almost entirely of commentary critical of the leadership's policies.

However, the results of the voting at the congress (which was done by secret ballot as always) were unanimous approval for all the leadership's proposals. Not one vote against or in abstention was recorded.

It is evident from reading between the lines of the JCP's documents that a clandestine opposition current formed in the Central Committee of the youth organisa-

tion during the 1972 period of retreat. Consisting of about twenty members, and pejoratively labelled "The New Opportunist Current" by party hacks, it made criticisms very similar to Hakamada's more recent accusations, principally that the party was becoming too chauvinistic and parliamentarian to attract militant youth.

The party is also under fire from some of its intellectuals, who are saying that it should become more like the Eurocommunist groups by reforming its structure to allow more internal democracy. There are even those CP theorists who now claim that Trotsky was "more correct" than Stalin in the 1920s debates.

Another difference is that the JCP is not as well rooted in the working class as, for example, the French and Italian CP's. The majority of its support now comes from the petty bourgeoisie, but this was not always so.

Immediately after World War II the CP had the majority influence in the working class, mainly because of its opposition to the war and the emperor. At that time it stood far to the left of the Japan Socialist Party, which supported both. The JCP also had considerable prestige and respect due to the fact that most of its leaders had been arrested and imprisoned during the 1930s for their activities against the emperor.

It sowed the seeds of its own destruction during the American occupation. By hailing the invading U.S. forces as "liberators," they were totally unprepared for the repression unleashed against them in the late 1940s. MacArthur and his administration spearheaded a campaign to oust Communists from the public sector, and pro-SP bureaucrats replaced CP civil servants and public officers. An attempt was made to extend this witch-hunt to teachers and lecturers, but this was less successful because of the militant response from the student movement.

In an attempt to make up for this disaster, the JCP desperately tried to become more "respectable," and lurched to the right. In the early 1960s, pro-Moscow currents in the party were expelled. In 1967, followers of the Peking line were ousted as a result of the disagreements between Mao and Miyamoto which arose during the Cultural Revolution.⁴ Since then, the JCP has claimed to be a self-reliant party of "Popular Parliamentarianism." With Miyamoto declaring that "after the revolu-

tion, the supreme organ of the state will be parliament," the party's main activity has become electioneering.

The most recent shift is therefore not an isolated incident, but is rather part of a continual process since the 1950s, of accommodation to the bourgeoisie and renunciation of the masses. That is why the leadership, despite the crisis it is creating

in its own ranks, cannot break from this tendency to move closer to the centrists.

They will never adopt a mass line, despite being under pressure from all sides. The Japanese Communist Party is now in the blind alley of building an electoral party, "special readership weeks" to boost the sales of the paper, and electioneering on a platform that has nothing to offer the masses but promises. □

Interview With a Nicaraguan Trotskyist

The Beginning of the End for Somoza

[The following interview with a Nicaraguan Trotskyist appeared in the February 18 issue of *Bandera Socialista*, a weekly newspaper published in Mexico City by the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (Revolutionary Workers Party). The translation is by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

* * *

Question. What sectors of Nicaraguan society are participating in the present anti-Somoza movement, and what role did they play in the general strike?

Answer. The sectors that participated in the anti-Somoza movement, which is ebbing at the present moment, are primarily the bourgeois layers that are dissatisfied with Somoza's economic policy. Somoza's policy has proven incapable of resolving the problems now facing the bourgeoisie. This has given rise to sharp conflicts inside the ruling class. The UDEL (Unión Democrática de Liberación)¹ is the political organization of the "democratic" sector of the bourgeoisie. Since it was founded in 1974, the UDEL has tried to present itself as the alternative to the decaying Somoza dictatorship.

The Partido Socialista Nicaragüense participates in the UDEL. It was the UDEL that called the general strike as a protest against the murder of Pedro Joaquín Chamorro.

Q. What role has the Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional [Sandinista National Liberation Front] played in this anti-Somoza movement?

A. The events of October 1977 brought

to light an alliance between the *tercerista*² faction of the Sandinista Front and a sector of the anti-Somoza bourgeoisie. This faction of the Sandinista Front (a majority of the organization) holds the position that the contradictions between imperialism and the Nicaraguan nation were resolved during the Sandino war with the "expulsion" of the U.S. Marines; so that the main contradiction that must be resolved today is the one between the people and the dictatorship. If this requires allying with the anti-Somoza bourgeoisie, such an alliance is permissible.

That is a very brief summary of their position. It has led them to form an alliance with the bourgeoisie to overthrow Somoza, without in any way defending the political and organizational independence of the workers.

Although their actions are marked by heroism and revolutionary ardor, they are being utilized by the bourgeoisie. As we can already see, the bourgeoisie prefers to hold a dialog with Somoza rather than carry the strike to its ultimate consequences.

The position of the *tercerista* tendency of the Sandinista Front is quite contradictory. Although it is progressive insofar as it seeks to bring down the dictatorship, it is retrogressive when it fails to defend the interests of the workers in such an alliance, however ephemeral it may be.

Because it lacks a consistent program combining the interests and aspirations of the masses, this faction has been incapable of organizing the masses around its objectives. When the Sandinista militants took Granada and Rivas, thousands of people gathered around them. The outcome, however, demonstrated the incapacities of the Sandinistas in the most tragic way.

4. Miyamoto visited China in 1966 and argued with Mao about the question of armed struggle in Japan. The 1965 military coup in Indonesia, which resulted in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of militants, had sobered the reformists and pushed Miyamoto to a more cautious, parliamentary position. Unable to reach agreement with Mao and issue a joint statement, Miyamoto returned to Japan and proceeded to oust Peking's supporters from the party.

1. Democratic Liberation Union, a front composed of the Conservative Party, several other bourgeois parties, two labor federations, the Partido Socialista Nicaragüense (Nicaraguan Socialist Party)—the pro-Moscow Nicaraguan CP), and the Sandinista National Liberation Front.—IP/I

2. *Terzerista*, literally translated, means "thirdist." The name distinguishes this faction of the FSLN from two others.—IP/I

Other tendencies are active within the Sandinista Front: the "proletarian" tendency, and the "prolonged people's war" tendency. The former holds the most advanced positions among the Sandinistas. It claims to be Marxist and states that building a revolutionary proletarian party and working among the masses are the only way to make the revolution.

Since it arose in 1975, the "proletarian" tendency has evolved consistently to the left. In the present situation, it is calling for a "popular front" against the dictatorship and against the maneuvers of the bourgeoisie. I think what these comrades mean is a struggle for a united front of the working class to overthrow the dictatorship. If that is so, it is correct; if not, then what they are trying to form is an actual popular front on a small scale, inasmuch as they also say that "democratic and revolutionary" currents should participate in such a front.

As to the other faction, it has no clear positions, and continues to uphold the method of prolonged people's war as the only way to defeat the dictatorship.

Even though such a strategy has been shown to be erroneous and inapplicable to Nicaragua, they are now heavily involved in "accumulating cadres" in order to resume the offensive. This faction has been weakened the most. It is in a deep crisis, without perspectives.

Question. In your opinion, what were the main features of the general strike?

A. In the first place we cannot speak of a general strike, in the strict sense of the term, without explaining that it was initiated by the bourgeoisie. What happened in Nicaragua was a "lockout," but one that had the support of the workers. The participation of the working class was minimal and passive, owing to its disorganized condition.

Second, the movement that unfolded in the main cities of the country did not gain the support of the peasantry, owing to continual repression by the National Guard as well as to the lack of adequate slogans expressing the most deeply felt need of the poor masses in the countryside—land.

Third, in the entire movement that developed against the dictatorship, the proletariat did not act in an independent way because the reformist leaders that participate in the UDEL have linked the fate of the proletariat to that of the bourgeoisie. The proletariat was not at the head of these struggles, but rather at the tail of the bourgeoisie.

Fourth, the dictatorship underwent the darkest moments of its history. The masses that were beginning to mobilize, although influenced by bourgeois ideology, threatened to sweep aside everything in their path. Because of a lack of coordination, the revolutionary potential of all this



La Prensa

Protest against Somoza in Nindirí, south of Managua, in late January.

activity on the part of the masses was diluted. What was missing was a revolutionary party to centralize all the masses' activity.

Fifth, history has shown many times—as in the case of Uruguay—that dictatorships do not fall as an outcome of "strikes," but as an outcome of actions of a greater scope.

In my judgment, those are the main things to be noted about the general strike.

Questions. What are the perspectives for the anti-Somoza movement, and what are the tasks for revolutionists?

A. The movement has gone into an ebb, not because the masses lack combativity, but because the bourgeoisie that supported the "lockout" preferred to seek a deal with Somoza. However, things are not as they were before. The masses have been losing their fear of the dictatorship, and it finds itself greatly weakened.

The dictatorship as such has begun to crumble away. We have entered the post-Somoza period, although the dictator is still to be found in the government. Decisive struggles by the masses are needed to completely wipe out the dictatorship.

These struggles must enable the workers to organize and strengthen themselves, so that the struggles do not remain purely at the bourgeois-democratic level. Up to the present time, we know of no class demands that the workers themselves have raised.

The leftist organizations lack a program, except for the Partido Socialista Nicaragüense [the CP]. The PSN's program is quite consistent, from the point of view of reformism. The task of greatest urgency is a discussion within the left about the recent events and the drawing of a balance sheet; as well as the elaboration of a transitional program encompassing the most deeply felt needs of the workers, furthering the development of their organizational capacity, and raising their consciousness.

This program must develop around three main slogans: amnesty, wages, and land. On the basis of this program, the revolutionary Marxist party in Nicaragua will be built. The Fourth International—the Trotskyists organized in the Liga Marxista Revolucionaria [Revolutionary Marxist League]—will play a very important role in carrying out this task. □

'Idleness' Outlawed in South Africa

In his first official act as the new minister in charge of administering South Africa's African majority, Connie Mulder introduced into Parliament the Bantu Laws Amendment Bill, commonly called the "idle Bantu bill" (Bantu is a racist term for Africans).

As Mulder explained, it is designed to keep "idle and work-shy blacks in check." Actually what it means is that Africans who are thrown out of work for more than 122 days in any calendar year are subject to arrest and confinement to a "rehabilitation centre," rural labor camp, "or similar

institution established or approved under the Prisons Act." In many such centers, prisoners are required to perform compulsory labor.

At a time when at least 634,000 Africans are unable to find work, according to conservative official figures, passage of the bill could mark the beginning of a major effort to deport "superfluous" Africans from the cities.

One National Party member of Parliament explained that the reason for the bill was that the unemployed were "the shock troops of the uprising of black youth."

Cracks Begin to Appear in Shah's Regime

By Ali Golestan

Protests against the shah's dictatorial rule erupted on a broad scale in January and February, leading to open confrontations with the police and army that left scores killed and hundreds wounded.

The public protests began last year when poetry readings and meetings organized by the Writers Association of Iran became a platform for expressing opposition to the shah's suppression of democratic rights. These meetings attracted tens of thousands of persons.*

With the shah's visit to the White House in November 1977, events took a different turn. Assured that Carter's "human rights" campaign was not designed for Iran, the shah ordered his police to break up meetings critical of the government, including those organized by the Writers Association.

A bloody wave of terror followed. Prominent members of the Writers Association were beaten up and arrested. Thugs were sent into the meetings to physically assault the participants. Many were injured.

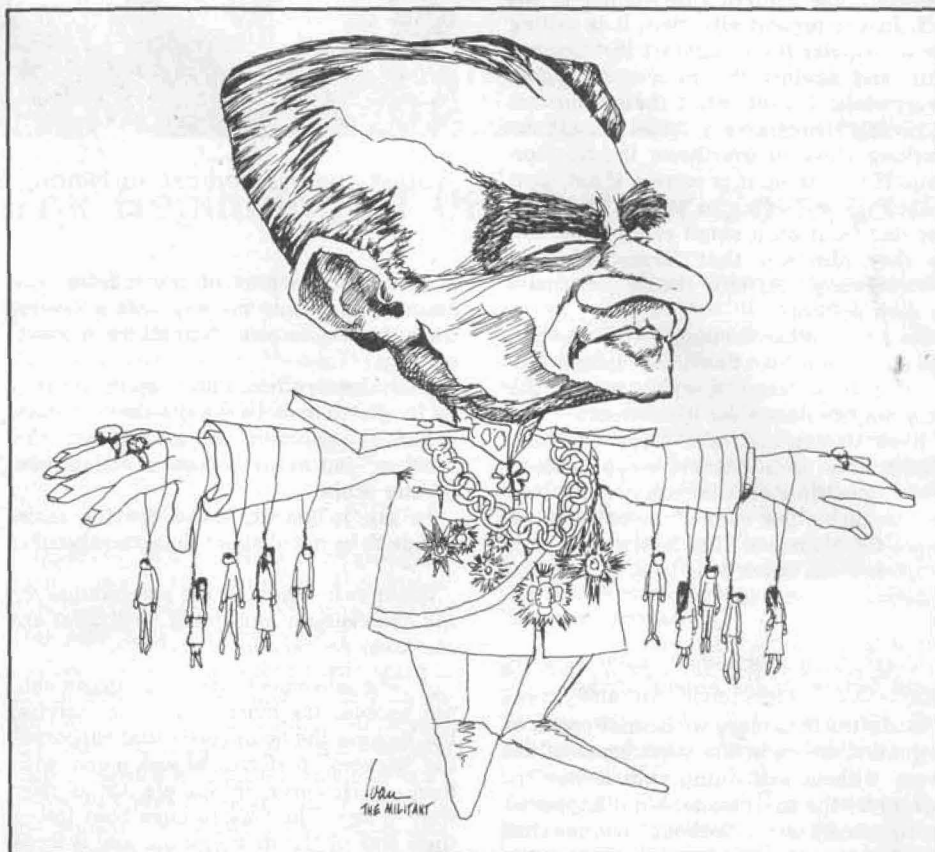
These measures were aimed at stopping the spread of the opposition. As a report in the February 25-March 3 issue of the London *Economist* put it, they marked an end to the shah's effort to "whitewash" his regime:

"... the successful conclusion of the Shah's talks in Washington in November marked an end to the whitewashing," the *Economist* said.

"Students meeting on Teheran university campus were disrupted, a demonstration in the city was violently dispersed by the police and one gathering of students on the outskirts of Teheran was broken up by armed thugs with the police looking on. A prominent member of the writers' association was arrested and beatings were reportedly administered to others."

In contrast to what has happened in the past, these brutal measures did not bring an end to the protests, although they did succeed in stopping them temporarily.

The next mass protest occurred in the city of Qum on January 9, 1978. Qum is a religious city with many Islamic schools and students. These protests followed the appearance of an article in the semiofficial Tehran daily *Ettela'at*. The article attacked Ayatullah Khomeini, one of the Iranian Muslim leaders who has been



Ivan/Militant

exiled by the government.

Students in Qum went on strike January 8 to protest the article. On the following day a group of demonstrators began a peaceful march toward one of the mosques. They were intercepted by the police, who opened fire with machine guns and rifles.

Government figures put the number of dead and wounded at six, but unofficial sources estimate that as many as one hundred persons were killed. According to reports that have appeared in the newsletters of dissident groups inside Iran, the people of Qum were asked by one of the Islamic leaders to donate blood for those wounded in the incident, but were prevented by the police from entering the hospitals.

Following these brutal murders by the government, the businesses in the bazaars of a few cities, including the capital city of Tehran, closed down for a few days in protest.

The government labeled the demonstrators "people opposed to land reform and

freedom for women," as January 7 coincides with the day declared by the shah's father as women's day in Iran. That charge and the term "Islamic Marxists" have been coined by the shah for use against Muslim groups that oppose his dictatorship.

To commemorate the fortieth day of the death of the Qum martyrs, the religious leader Ayatullah Shariatmadari called for a day of business shutdown and "peaceful mourning."

In response to this appeal, protests took place February 18-20 in several large cities, including Tabriz, Isfahan, Shiraz, and Ahwaz.

The biggest of these demonstrations occurred in Tabriz. Although detailed accounts of the events there are not yet available abroad, it appears that the police tried to prevent demonstrators from gathering in the mosques. This sparked further protests by those gathered in the mosques, which the police answered by opening fire.

People then poured out into the streets. It

*See "Rising Protest Against Dictatorial Rule in Iran," in *Intercontinental Press*, December 12, 1977, p. 1362.

was during this upheaval that the army intervened with tanks and machine guns. According to government sources 9 persons were killed, 125 injured, and 450 arrested. Unofficial sources put the death toll at least ten times higher.

The shah again branded the protesters "Islamic Marxists." He also claimed that they had burned banks, theaters, and schools. It is not clear whether this is actually true or whether the government has repeated its past practice of instigating such actions in an effort to discredit the protests.

One point is clear, however. The fact

that it took intervention by the army to crush this protest shows that the shah is now facing one of the most serious challenges to his rule since the coup that put him in power in 1953.

The events in Tabriz were summed up in a report in the February 26 *New York Times*, under the headline, "There Are Cracks in Shah's Regime":

"Things are not what they seem in Iran. Riots last week in the nation's second largest city, Tabriz, following similar disturbances earlier this year in Qom, are signs of dissatisfaction underlying the

'stability' usually proclaimed by Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlevi.

"... for many of Iran's 33 million people poverty is still the norm and they want to share some of the wealth accumulated by adherents of the Teheran regime. Stringent control by the Shah's army and secret police, Savak, repress most political dissent."

The government's inability to cope with the general discontent stemming from economic, social, and political factors promises to bring about many more "cracks" in the regime and widen the existing ones. □

'A Clear-cut Victory for Freedom of Speech'

U.S. College Drops All Charges Against Six Iranian Activists

By José G. Pérez

[The following article appeared in the March 10 issue of the *Militant*, a revolutionary-socialist newsweekly published in New York.]

* * *

Six members of the Committee for Artistic and Intellectual Freedom in Iran (CAIFI) have won their fight against trumped-up disruption charges that had been filed against them by the Jersey City State College administration.

The JCSC officials withdrew the charges at a February 23 hearing before Jersey City, New Jersey, Municipal Court Judge Edward Zampella.

"We have been vindicated," said Kateh Vafadari Zahraie, one of the defendants and CAIFI's assistant national secretary.

"This is a clear-cut victory for freedom of speech won by the hundreds of people who sent protest messages or signed petitions demanding charges be dropped." Such protests had come from all over the United States, as well as Québec, England, and Holland.

If the college administration had not been forced to back down, the six could have been jailed for up to three years and deported to Iran. There, they would have faced certain imprisonment and torture, and possibly death, because they have been outspoken critics of the brutal repression of U.S.-backed despot Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlevi.

Among those who protested the frame-up were former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark; Nobel Laureate Salvador Luria; Prof. Noam Chomsky; Karen DeCrow, past president of the National Organization for Women; playwrights Edward Albee and

Eric Bentley; novelist Kurt Vonnegut; Kay Boyle, author and honorary cochairperson of CAIFI; Reza Baraheni, honorary co-chairperson of CAIFI and former political prisoner in Iran; Paul Sweezy, editor of *Monthly Review*; and Ahmad Shamlou, Iranian poet and former political prisoner.

In addition, the persecution of the Iranian activists was becoming a political hot potato for the college administration within the campus itself. The February 17 *Gothic Times*, the student newspaper at JCSC, carried a front-page story about the case under the headline, "Political Dispute Results in Nationwide Campaign Against JCSC." The paper also published an editorial criticizing the administration for discriminating against CAIFI.

On February 20, the student government held a long discussion on the case, and voted to request that charges be dropped.

College cops arrested the six January 19 while they were on campus filing an application for a permit to set up a literature table. The cops falsely claimed the six "did disrupt the normal academic procedures of the college."

After being forced to retreat, the college administration put out a news release claiming they had been right all along and saying charges were being dropped "solely because we would not like to subject these young people to deportation and possible political reprisals back home."

However, lawyers for the college apparently were not so sure the administration was blameless: as part of the agreement for dropping the charges, they demanded that the CAIFI activists sign a promise not to sue the college or city cops "for false imprisonment or for any other reason or charge."

Howard Brownstein, an attorney pro-

vided by the New Jersey affiliate of the American Civil Liberties Union, represented the six at the February 23 hearing. In a short presentation to the court, Brownstein pointed out that the college officials had no reason to arrest the six to begin with. "This is America, not Iran," Brownstein said. "They had a right to go on campus."

Kateh Vafadari Zahraie told the *Militant*, "This is more than a victory for the six of us, CAIFI, and freedom of speech on this particular campus."

She said that in recent months harassment and attacks on Iranian students and dissidents had increased. "This case is a warning to the U.S. government and college administrators all over this country that the American people will not stand for the persecution of Iranians who protest the brutal repression of the Iranian government."

She noted that the college administration's claim that it dropped the charges because it didn't want to see the six deported was a lie. When the activists were first arrested, campus officials had threatened to call the immigration cops, in effect threatening deportation.

"The college's 180-degree about-face four weeks later wasn't due to a sudden conversion to the cause of human rights," Vafadari Zahraie said. "It was due to the pressure of the protests they received."

"This victory, as well as past victories we have scored in winning freedom for Iranian political prisoners, reinforces our conviction that the most effective way to fight for human rights is by mobilizing public opinion through everything from petitions and protest-message campaigns to picket lines and demonstrations," she said. □

'Democratic Socialist' Manley Cracks Down on the Workers

By Sheila Malone

[The author is a member of the Caribbean Socialist Group in Britain.]

* * *

In April of last year, the International Monetary Fund granted Jamaica a loan of J\$74 million [US\$67 million]. In October, the World Bank promised a further J\$68 million.

The conditions for this aid were a wage freeze and three devaluations of the Jamaican dollar—of 37%, 3%, and a further 15.5% this year. (The devaluations did not apply to the tourist or export-sales exchange rate, however, creating a two-rate system.) The Jamaican dollar is now worth about half what it was a year ago, in relation to U.S. currency.

The effects were seen over the past year, as prices rose and workers' living standards plummeted. Unemployment jumped to 30% as thousands were laid off, including dock, construction, and tobacco workers.

Growing opposition to this situation was met with harsh repression from the government. Security forces were used to break up a strike by Esso workers. Women protesting against shortages were harassed and intimidated by police.

On September 7, 1977, pickets from Standard Building Products were put on trial for murder. This followed an incident in which their boss attempted to drive a front-end loader through their picket line, but ended by losing his own life.

In November all marches and public meetings were banned.

It is a little more than a year now since Michael Manley, who first came to power in 1972, led the People's National Party to a resounding victory at the Jamaican polls in December 1976, on a platform of "democratic socialism."

The PNP won massive popular support because it promised basic reforms and improvements in living standards through creation of jobs, crash housing programmes, and increases in social expenditures. It promised to curb the power of the big capitalists, landowners, and imperialists, and to end the so-called crime wave. (Incidents in which firearms were used had escalated rapidly on the island, mainly involving unemployed youth.)

In regard to foreign policy, Manley gave verbal support to African liberation movements such as the MPLA,* championed the cause of the "Third World" with his support for a "new economic order" as an alternative to imperialist exploitation, and



MANLEY: "Socialist Time Now" does not mean land seizures or factory occupations.

established good relations with Cuba and the Soviet bloc.

However, despite a vicious anticommunist smear campaign by the right-wing opposition Jamaica Labour Party, Manley made it quite clear from the beginning that "democratic socialism" for him meant a "mixed," basically capitalist, economy, and that foreign investment was welcome.

Although he imposed a tax levy on bauxite, much of this most profitable resource was left in American or Canadian hands. While some companies, such as Kaiser, were partially nationalised, 49% of the ownership remained in foreign hands.

Manley also kept the Labour Relations and Industrial Disputes Act—modeled on the Tory Industrial Relations Act in Britain.

In June 1976, prior to the election, Manley introduced a state of emergency on the island, following gang warfare between rival PNP and JLP supporters in which at least 300 persons died. (The American CIA was widely suspected of having a hand in instigating the violence.) The state of emergency was not lifted until the follow-

ing March, three months after the election.

Manley imposed harsh repressive measures to deal with crime, utilising in particular the Gun Court legislation of 1974.

Under this law, police were given powers to arrest and detain anyone suspected of possessing or using firearms. Detainees, most of whom were under twenty-one years of age, were taken to a barbed-wire-enclosed compound in the poor area of West Kingston, tried there, and given sentences that could actually be unlimited in length.

These police powers have now been curtailed. But the Gun Court remains as the government's panic solution to the problem of unemployed, destitute youth drawn into crime.

When Manley returned to office, unemployment was around 25%, and the cost of living was soaring. Businessmen had sent J\$300 million in capital out of Jamaica, and foreign reserves were exhausted. The government stood at a crossroads. It was evident that failure to deal radically with the private sector and with foreign interests would preclude carrying out promised reforms. Instead it would mean accommodation to those big business and foreign interests. It was clear also that the only forces that could be relied on to carry through policies that challenged capitalist and imperialist domination were those who had always suffered the effects of that domination—namely, the working class and the oppressed.

Despite Manley's radical rhetoric—slogans such as "We Are Not for Sale" (to the imperialists), "Socialist Time Now," and even "Power to the People"—he has in fact shown his real attitude toward the movement of the masses by first trying to head it off and then by clamping down on it.

The spontaneous attempts to translate some of these slogans into action through factory occupations and land seizures are now dealt with ruthlessly. Whereas before and just after the election, Manley was not prepared to evict workers from the Colony Hotel occupation or the land take-overs in Mapen or "squats" in Kingston, he now strongly condemns such activities as against the "national interest" and represses them.

Significantly, although the government created a special new post for supervising protest activity—minister of mobilisation—the man appointed to fill it, D. K. Duncan, who was also general secretary of the PNP, has now been forced to

*MPLA—Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola).—IP/1

resign both positions after a vicious witch-hunt by the right wing. Duncan said he had been accused of plotting against the prime minister, and, later, that there had been two attempts to poison him (reported in the November 12 *Star*).

Duncan's resignation and the expulsion at the same time of another opposition figure, Hugh Small, marks the defeat of the left within the PNP. This left wing of petty-bourgeois radicals had previously had some effect in pushing the party in an anti-imperialist direction and in pressuring Manley himself. Their departure now leaves Manley firmly in control, but after a definite shift to the right.

Manley's visits in December to the United States and Europe to discuss business deals confirmed this shift, as did Andrew Young's visit to Jamaica in August. In contrast, the visits to Jamaica of Samora Machel and Fidel Castro yielded nothing significant, and should be seen as an attempt by Manley to keep some kind of a left face.

Meanwhile the opposition JLP and the right have seized the opportunity to exploit the present crisis.

Shortages of basic consumer goods like soap and cooking oil are being used to whip up the hostility of the middle class, especially middle-class women.

Washington-supported organisations of the extreme right such as the Friends for a Free Jamaica are recouping their support.

The right-wing press, particularly the *Daily Gleaner*, are conducting a campaign against the left similar to the one they carried out before the election.

There is a continuing refusal to invest by businessmen.

Members of the middle class, with their skills and money, are still quitting the island at an alarming rate (15,000 last year).

However, there has been a determined fight-back against the government's attacks on living standards and democratic rights. As a result of mounting unemployment, a rise in prices of 7.5% between January and June of last year, and the wage freeze, there have been strikes of oil workers, cement workers, fire fighters, government workers, health workers, journalists, and others.

Thirteen unions, representing the majority of organised workers in Jamaica, have called on the government to withdraw the wage guidelines and for wage rises linked to the cost of living.

The PNP Youth Organisation produced a sharp criticism of the government in its Position Paper of last July, in which it called for the taking over of land, banks, and insurance companies, and for a united struggle against capitalism and imperialism by the workers, small farmers, unemployed youth, and students.

The Stalinist-influenced Workers Liberation League has been in the forefront of some of the major struggles, including the

large demonstration against capitalist control of the media last August. But it has been hindered from showing an effective way forward by its policy of relying on pressuring the lefts within the PNP.

Given the decisive defeat now of this left, there is more than ever a need for linking up with and organising the present fight-

back, in which the struggle against the wage guidelines and the defense of democratic rights are central. But it points equally and urgently to the need for a political alternative to Manley and his capitalist policies, through the development of a programme of demands linked to these struggles. □

Rise in Workers Struggles in West Germany

Since the beginning of the year, there has been an explosion of workers struggles in West Germany, confirming the impression given earlier by the IG-Metall congress that things were beginning to stir among the working class in that country.¹

In January, there was a five-day strike on the West German waterfront (the first "official" dock strike in twenty-seven years). The strike ended with a compromise wage increase of 7%. The union had demanded 9%, the bosses had offered less than 5%, and the "neutral" mediator had proposed 5.3%. But since the increase did not take effect until February 1, it actually represented less than 7% for all of 1978.

Against the advice of the union leadership, the dockworkers rejected this compromise. Within twenty-four hours, the bosses agreed to make the 7% increase retroactive to January 1. This victory for the dockworkers is very important for the entire West German working class. The bosses (and the government) are hoping to hold wage increases down to 3% or 3.5% this year. The 7% raise won by the dockworkers will set an example for other union (and unionists) now in the process of collective bargaining.

For several months, the publishing workers' union (IG-Druck und Papier) has been involved in tough bargaining with the bosses. At issue are not only a new wage settlement, but above all measures to insure that the new technology that has been widely introduced into the printshops does not lead to large-scale layoffs and retrenchments.

The negotiating team agreed on January 18 and 19 to offers that incorporated a good part of the bosses' position. Thousands of publishing workers then launched warning strikes, including on January 31, the day when the union wage committee was supposed to make a final decision on the proposals agreed to previously. Under pressure from the ranks, the wage committee this time rejected the proposed new contract settlement. On February 8, the union once again called for limited warning strikes.

In the metal industry, it appears that wage negotiations will be very tough. On

February 1, the IG-Metall leadership announced that negotiations had fallen through in the North Württemberg-North Baden district, which includes the booming automobile plants in Stuttgart and Mannheim.

That is where the union wants to concentrate its effort to win more than the 3.5% offered by the bosses. It is demanding an 8% raise, and, most importantly, union watchdog measures to guard against speedup, and to maintain the wages of metalworkers whose work shifts are changed. A strike by metalworkers in these districts is not excluded.

The bosses, who wish to avoid any overall wage increases over the 3.5% limit, are taking advantage of the difficulties of those sectors still hit hard by the crisis to threaten the union with a lockout. In the Ruhr, for example, it was the bosses who announced that the negotiations had fallen through.

To counter this threat, militant trade-unionists and the Trotskyists of the International Marxist Group, the German section of the Fourth International, are demanding that the union announce in advance that it will not call off the strike unless the bosses pay retroactive wages to all workers hit by the lockout.

To be sure, there is still a pronounced discrepancy between this explosion of workers struggles and the beginning of a political radicalization of the working class that has definitely not occurred up to now.²

Nevertheless, the resumption of workers struggles does indicate that the West German bourgeoisie is running up against sizable obstacles in its drive toward a strong state. It would be absolutely wrong to consider the German workers movement and the German working class as having been eliminated or as an insignificant force, despite the appearances. □

1. See "What the Polls Show—and Don't Show—About West Germany" in *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*, February 6, p. 144.

2. At the recent congress of the Young Socialists, the youth organization of the German Social Democratic Party (SPD), fairly radical resolutions were adopted on the question of professional blacklisting. The four Social Democratic deputies who had refused to vote for the new "antiterrorist" law were wildly applauded. But there will be no follow-up to this, because the Young Socialist leadership carefully avoids all conflicts with the SPD bureaucracy.

Support Grows for Héctor Marroquín's Right to Asylum

Héctor Marroquín, the Mexican revolutionary socialist who is appealing for political asylum in the United States, began a national speaking tour February 14 in San Antonio, Texas.

Marroquín is currently in danger of being deported back to Mexico, where he faces frame-up charges of "terrorism" because of his student political activity at the University of Nuevo León in Monterrey. He has appealed for asylum on grounds that his life would be endangered if he were to be returned to Mexico.

Joining Marroquín on the platform at several meetings in San Antonio was Rosario Ibarra de Piedra, the founder of a Monterrey committee that defends political prisoners, persons who have "disappeared" after arrest, and exiles.

Ibarra de Piedra's son, Jesús Piedra Ibarra, was accused along with Marroquín in the 1974 murder of a librarian in Monterrey. In April 1975, Jesús Piedra was captured by Mexican police and has not been heard from since.

Fearing the same fate that Piedra w. later to meet, Héctor Marroquín fled Mexico after learning of the frame-up murder charges and began living in the United States under an assumed name.

Marroquin later became a member of the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialist Alliance and helped to build the movement against deportation of undocumented Mexican workers.

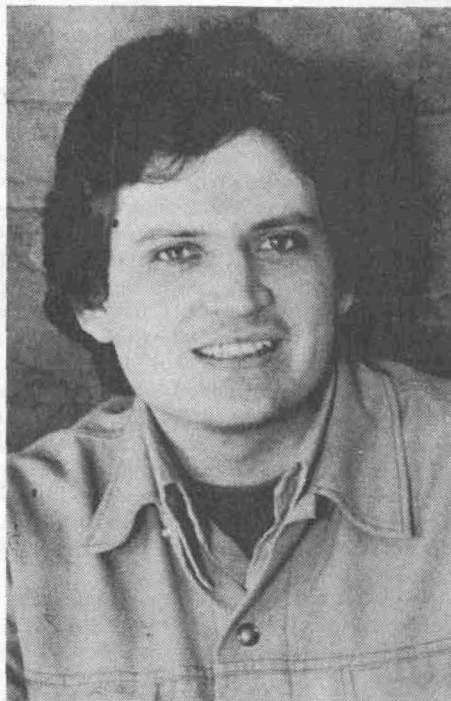
Last September, when returning from a meeting in Mexico with his attorney, Marroquín was arrested for attempted illegal entry at a Texas border station and held in jail for three months. It was then that he decided to request political asylum.

Since that time, with the support of the U.S. Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners and the recently formed Héctor Marroquín Defense Committee, the Mexican socialist has secured a number of partial victories.

The U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) at first tried to "exclude" Marroquín without even considering his request for asylum. But as public support grew, the INS decided to grant a deportation hearing. In the event of an unfavorable ruling, Marroquín will have the right to appeal through the courts.

The hearing was set at first for January 17, but then postponed indefinitely after Marroquín's attorney, Margaret Winter, complained about the lack of time for preparing an adequate defense. A hearing could come at any time, however.

The INS tried initially to limit Marroquín's right to travel and speak in his own



Susan Ellis/Militant

HECTOR MARROQUIN

behalf. "I don't think that illegal aliens have the right to go waltzing around the country making speeches," INS District Director Joe Staley told Winter. But the INS later backed down, and Marroquín is now on a nationwide tour. By the first week in May, he will have addressed meetings and rallies and spoken with the news media in more than twenty cities.

Attorney Winter has presented the INS with extensive evidence exposing the spurious nature of the Mexican government's charges against Marroquín, as well as documenting the repressive political atmosphere in Mexico.

On the other hand, government documents secured by the Héctor Marroquín Defense Committee through a request made under the U.S. Freedom of Information Act have demonstrated that the INS withheld from Marroquín's attorneys other evidence substantiating his claims. And although he later denied it, INS official Staley told Winter February 10 that he didn't "need to look at" the evidence she was submitting. "I'm going to base my decision on the transcript of the preliminary examination," Staley said. This was a brief interview held when Marroquín was still in jail last November.

A number of new supporters of Marroquín's right to asylum have been added in

recent weeks to the impressive list gathered earlier. Among the new endorsers are U.S. Congressman Ronald Dellums of California, poet Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Wilmington 10 defendant Anne Sheppard Turner, American Civil Liberties Union founder Roger Baldwin, critic and writer Eric Bentley, attorney William Kunstler, Herbert Aptheker of the American Institute for Marxist Studies, and Angela Davis.

The case has also received attention in the Mexican press. The major Mexico City daily *Excelsior* carried an extensive article on page two of its February 19 edition, written by the paper's Washington correspondent, Fausto Fernández Ponte. Fernández explained that "the Marroquín case . . . is part of a broad debate [on deportation of undocumented workers] taking place in academic and judicial circles as well as in the newspapers." He outlined the facts in the case and the evidence Winter has presented to the INS in Marroquín's defense, and reported the support the Mexican socialist has received.

"One of the notable declarations is that of John Womack, Jr., the celebrated author of *Zapata*, a work considered a classic in the field of political history. The work was banned in Mexico during the government of President Díaz Ordaz, but was later acclaimed."

Womack, a professor of history at Harvard University, has provided the defense committee with an affidavit on the repressive situation in Mexico.

Legal costs in the defense of Marroquín are expected to be more than \$20,000. To make a contribution, or to add your name to the growing list of supporters of the right to political asylum, contact the Héctor Marroquín Defense Committee, 853 Broadway, Suite 414, New York, N.Y. 10003. A sixteen-page pamphlet, *My Story*, by Héctor Marroquín, is available from the committee for \$0.50. □

Copies Missing?

Keep your files complete and up-to-date. Missing issues for the current year may be ordered by sending 75¢ per copy. Write for information about previous years.

Intercontinental Press/Inprecor

P.O. Box 116

Varick Street Station

New York, N.Y. 10014

Capitalism Fouls Things Up

Riding the Rails to Disaster

Two rail disasters in the southern United States during the last week of February have called attention to the growing deterioration of track and equipment on the U.S. railroads.

On February 24, a tank car containing 20,000 gallons of liquid propane gas exploded in Waverly, Tennessee. The resulting 500-foot fireball killed twelve persons, injured more than fifty, and leveled fourteen buildings in the town's business district. The blast set fire to a second propane tank car. Had that one also exploded, much of the residential section of Waverly would have been destroyed.

Following the explosion and fire, all persons within a one-half-mile radius were evacuated until the second car could be safely unloaded.

The liquid propane tanks were among twenty-four cars of a Louisville and Nashville Railroad train that had derailed in Waverly on February 22.

Less than two days after the Tennessee explosion, forty-seven cars of an Atlanta and St. Andrews Bay Railroad freight left the tracks near Youngstown, Florida. A tank car ruptured, sending a dense cloud of highly poisonous chlorine gas across a highway near the tracks. Dozens of motorists suffered injuries to their lungs from inhaling the chlorine, and eight persons died.

The chlorine blanketed the highway and the surrounding area for several days. Authorities barricaded off 140 square miles and evacuated between 2,000 and 3,500 persons. Besides the chlorine gas danger, there was also fear that a liquid propane tank car similar to the ones involved in the Tennessee accident might explode.

Further death and destruction was averted in two other derailments involving hazardous chemicals on February 26 and 28. In the first of these, twenty-five cars of an Illinois Central train derailed near Cades, Tennessee (sixty miles west of Waverly). This train had tank cars containing highly corrosive sodium hydroxide (caustic soda or lye), and other liquefied gas tank cars. The latter were empty, but still susceptible to explosion. Seven hundred families were evacuated from the Cades area as a precautionary step.

The last reported derailment occurred

near Bowling Green, Kentucky, and involved thirty-three cars of a Louisville and Nashville train carrying flammable methyl bromide insecticide and other dangerous chemicals. Some of these cars may have been transferred from the freight that derailed in Waverly, Tennessee, earlier in the week.

While the Florida and Tennessee accidents captured the headlines for several days, they were only two out of the thousands of train derailments that occur in the United States each year. In 1977 alone, 7,858 derailments were reported. Of these, 500 involved hazardous substances. More than 4,000 of the 1977 derailments resulted from improperly maintained track or roadbed.

According to Larry Kramer, writing in the February 28 *Washington Post*, "The track belonging to much of the American rail system is deteriorating rapidly, and the financially troubled industry is doing little to stop the dangerous trend." Because of allegedly declining profits in the rail industry, trains are becoming longer and heavier while track maintenance is receiving less attention. Thus "the risk of derailments like those occurring over the past weekend increases rapidly. . . ."

"The first place a railroad cuts costs is in the area of maintenance of track and equipment," a federal rail safety official told Kramer. This cost-cutting also involves attacks on workers in the rail industry.

In contract negotiations now under way, the rail companies are pushing to cut the size of train crews by one-fourth, thus making safe operations by the remaining crew members even more difficult. The rail companies have already won the power to assign track crews to exhausting eight-hour workweeks, with no overtime pay.

U.S. Transportation Secretary Brock Adams has admitted that the recent disasters were caused by decrepit roadbeds, but refuses to force the rail companies to make the necessary improvements.

The irrationality of the whole situation was summed up by a Mississippi state official quoted in the New York *Trib* February 28: "I had a railroad man tell me if the railroads would spend the money on roadbeds and maintenance that they

spend on repairing equipment damaged in derailments the roadbeds would be in perfect condition."

Setback for Seabrook Nuclear Plant

A federal appeals court in Boston acted February 15 to overturn the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's approval of the nuclear power plant under construction at Seabrook, New Hampshire.

The court said EPA head Douglas Costle had failed to follow proper procedures before granting approval to the plant. In considering the effects of the plant's cooling system on the marine environment off the New Hampshire coast, Costle relied on the findings of a panel of scientific experts. But "no party [in the dispute over the plant] was given any opportunity to comment on the panel's report," the court said.

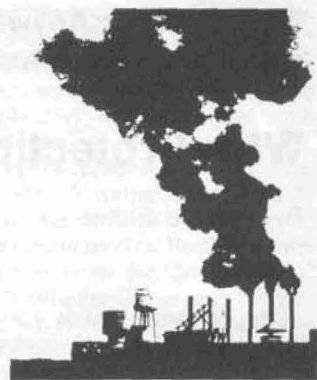
The cooling system of the 2,300-megawatt plant will circulate 1.2 billion gallons of sea water through the installation's two reactors each day. This water will return to the ocean 39 degrees Fahrenheit (22 degrees Celsius) hotter than the surrounding coastal waters.

Fishermen in the area fear that such thermal pollution could destroy their livelihood. Environmentalists have noted that massive fishkills have occurred at other locations where such "once-through" cooling systems are used.

EPA regional administrator John McGlennon had concurred with these concerns and blocked approval of the plant, but Costle overruled him last June.

'Hang Your Clothes on a Hickory Limb . . .'

Pollution is so bad in the Mediterranean that dead porpoises are continually being swept up onto the smartest beaches. The Swedish Academy of Science is the latest to report that the waters are an invitation to polio, cholera and hepatitis. Money makers in the tourist industries would like the situation cleaned up but are not too worried. Their general reaction: "Our best paying customers love to go nude on the beaches, but they wouldn't think of getting wet by going into the water."—*San Francisco Examiner*, February 12.



Why Protectionism Doesn't Save Jobs

By Richard Fidler

[The following article appeared in the February 20 issue of *Socialist Voice*, a revolutionary-socialist newspaper published fortnightly in Toronto.]

* * *

What can be done to save the jobs of workers in Canada's resource industries?

The question is posed sharply by the massive layoffs now occurring in nickel and copper. Inco is laying off 3,450 workers in Sudbury and Thompson, about half of them this month; thousands more are threatened with further cutbacks by this mining multinational.

Falconbridge shut down its Sudbury operations for a month last fall, and is eliminating about 1,200 jobs altogether during the current year. Noranda is rumored to be preparing a layoff of several thousand workers.

Company officials put most of the blame on world oversupply of markets, and foreign competition.

The international capitalist recession, and slower-than-expected upturns in the major consuming countries, have glutted the market with huge unsold inventories of nickel and copper as well as other major metals. Inco says it has a nine-month stockpile of nickel.

Producers have responded to this overproduction in two ways: the mass layoffs, and intensified competition. Inco, for example, complains it is being undersold by its international rivals—in particular by Amax, a U.S. firm that is attempting to cut into Inco's traditional markets.

Twenty-five years ago Inco alone accounted for more than 90 percent of nickel production in the capitalist countries; today it is still the world's largest producer, but its share of world production is down to 35 percent.

In part, these shifts reflect sharpened rivalry among the major imperialist producers; in part they reflect the increased share of production by the noncapitalist countries and the effects of nationalization of production in some underdeveloped countries under the pressure of the colonial revolution.

Controlling less of the market, Inco and its Canadian competitors are less able to manipulate world supply and prices to their own advantage.

The result is increased pressure for protectionist measures—using state aid to exert greater clout with international ri-

Inco—One of World's Largest Mining Trusts

With assets of more than \$3 billion, not including ore reserves, Inco is one of the giants of the world mining industry. It has investments in Indonesia, South Africa, England, the United States, and Central America, as well as Canada. Its new nickel complex in Guatemala is the largest single foreign investment in that country.

Some say Inco invests abroad to take advantage of lower wages. Amnesty International, in a recent letter to Trudeau, suggested that Inco may be using the forced labor of political prisoners in Indonesia.

Inco's major concern, however, is to strengthen its share of the world market. By investing in Indonesia and Guatemala, for example, it is seeking to maintain a production base in the new lateritic ores now coming into production.

The lateritic ores are more costly to extract and process than the sulphide ores that are Inco's traditional base, since they require very high energy inputs. Why, then, doesn't Inco respond to falling profit levels by curtailing these overseas operations, as some critics have suggested?

The truth is, costs of production of

this or that part of Inco's empire is only one consideration in its corporate strategy. Some economists say that Inco may well be cutting lower-cost production at Sudbury and Thompson in order to help keep international nickel prices high enough to make higher-cost foreign operations profitable. Its Indonesian and Guatemalan investments are beachheads for expansion into the lucrative Japanese and West European markets.

Just as the oil companies blamed their higher prices on the Arab sheiks, Inco and its defenders say the current layoffs result in part from refusal of semicolonial countries to curtail nickel and copper production. But Inco itself has strong reasons to favor overseas production.

And that's why Inco officials looked askance at Trudeau's cartel proposal. Inco already behaves like a cartel. Its criticism of some foreign producers is precisely that they don't play by the rules of the game it has helped to establish. By developing alternative sources of raw materials overseas, Inco can use its reinforced market dominance to club semicolonial competitors into line.

vals, and ultimately to extend their share of the world market.

Thus, Inco for example has enlisted federal government support in its struggle with Amax. Ottawa says it may protest Amax "dumping" to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, the international body that regulates trade.

And Prime Minister Trudeau proposed—with initial approval of the Conservative and NDP opposition—the formation of a world nickel cartel. By enforcing higher world nickel prices, Trudeau implied, such a cartel could restore Inco's superprofits, and thereby induce the company to avert further layoffs.

Such measures would jeopardize jobs, not save them.

Cartels as a rule raise prices (and profits) by restricting production.

Moreover, cartels designed to bolster the prices of Canadian exports invite retaliation

by cartels that push up the prices of things Canada imports. Cartel action thereby stimulates the growing trend toward a global trade war that might well plunge the world capitalist economy into a new depression.

Higher nickel prices increase the cost of products made from nickel—such as aircraft, stainless steel, and automobiles—and thereby reduce purchases of these and related items, from airline tickets to electric toasters. The result is lower production and loss of jobs, not only in the nickel industry but throughout the economy.

It's easy to see why big business and its parties advocate such protectionist measures. For multinational giants like Inco, the only way to maintain and increase profits—and that's what capitalist production is all about—is to gain control over

world prices through monopoly control of production and sales.

Some critics of Inco, however, have come up with their own version of protectionist arguments.

NDP leader Ed Broadbent, in a speech to a steelworkers union conference in Sudbury October 22, called on the government to "launch a policy of pressuring the resource corporations to reverse their priorities and put their major new investment into mineral manufacturing in Canada."

In Broadbent's view, "What the federal government should have been doing is saying to Inco and Falconbridge: 'If you want tax concessions, fast write-offs, loans and investment insurance, you build a smelter in the Sudbury basin and export finished products, not raw material.'"

Another MP, John Rodriguez (NDP—Nickel Belt), has urged the government to stop imports of nickel carbonate. And Elie Martel, an NDP member of the Ontario legislature from Sudbury, says companies like Inco and Falconbridge have a "moral obligation" to buy Canadian-made mining equipment.

These demands were echoed by a recent policy conference of District 6 (Ontario) of the Steelworkers union, whose Local 6500 represents the Inco workers.

Nationalist proposals like these will not save the workers' jobs, however.

In the first place, increased government hand-outs or restrictions on competitive imports don't necessarily result in more jobs. As the NDP demonstrated in its 1972 "corporate welfare bums" campaign, companies like Inco simply pocket the money. Even if they use the government money to invest, they won't necessarily hire more workers. The only "incentive" corporations respond to is measures that reduce their labor costs, such as speed-up, automation, wage freezes, and layoffs.

Secondly, as the NDP has pointed out many times, it is the workers who pay for these measures—through their taxes and higher product prices.

Thirdly—neither the NDP nor the unions point this out—protectionist measures of this kind simply pit the workers of different countries against each other, in a struggle that none of them can win. In every country workers are being asked to accept layoffs, wage cuts, and speed-up in order to help out "their" national capitalists.

It is an illusion to think that a corporation like Inco can be induced to reorient its corporate strategy in the "national" interest. And it's an even bigger illusion to think that Canadian workers will benefit.

As the accompanying article on page 310 shows, Inco has every reason to expand and diversify its operations internationally. Its ability to manipulate production levels on a world scale certainly increases the job insecurity of its employees in Canada—as everywhere else. But the answer to that is not to try to get

Inco to confine its operations to Canada or "buy Canadian."

Striving to maximize profits, Inco long ago outgrew the limitations of production in a single country. The problem must be tackled at its roots—Inco's private ownership. Inco and the entire mineral resources industry in Canada should be nationalized without compensation, and operated under workers control in the interests of the working people.

Proposals that sidestep this fundamental issue necessarily fall short of a solution. They amount to telling the capitalist owners of Inco to use more costly procedures. But under private ownership higher costs will inevitably be passed on to the workers, through higher product prices, rationalization of plant and equipment,

and even further scaling down of production in this country.

A radically different approach is needed. Under public ownership, nickel production could be planned in accordance with workers' interests.

Would that be planning in the "national" interest? A nationalized industry would not be immune to the shocks of international trade rivalry. But the answer to that is not to strive for "little-Canada" national self-sufficiency, or any similar nationalist goal. Rather, the problem poses the need for planning of production on an international scale.

And that in turn points to the need for a world socialist order—to end forever the suicidal international economic and political rivalry with which capitalist ownership and rule threatens humanity. □

For Opposing Speed-up Scheme

Alan Thornett Under Attack at British Leyland

A witch-hunt has been launched inside the British Transport and General Workers Union (T&GWU) against Alan Thornett and a number of other left-wing union militants at the Cowley plant of the state-owned British Leyland automobile enterprise.

Thornett, a well-known Trotskyist, is chairman of branch 5/293 of the T&GWU at Cowley, a post he has held since 1975. In December 1977, he was elected a deputy convenor of the Cowley T&GWU in a plant-wide vote by the workers. He had held this post before, but was ousted by the right-wing T&GWU officialdom in May 1974.

Thornett has now been charged with "bringing the union into disrepute," along with newly elected Cowley convenor Bob Fryer, branch 5/293 Secretary Frank Corti, and at least eight other members of the T&GWU at Cowley. The charges stem from an alleged "disruption" of a meeting of the Oxford District Committee of the union last October.

A hand-picked committee of bureaucrats brought the charges, conducted hearings, and recommended to the Midlands Regional Committee of the union that Thornett be expelled from the union and that Corti and others be barred for life from holding any union office.

The regional committee was to hold hearings on these recommendations February 27-28. On February 27, a British High Court judge turned down an effort by 5/293 Secretary Corti to force cancellation of the hearings on the grounds that they would be "biased" and "unfair" because of bureaucratic violations of the T&GWU's

constitution.

That these moves are being made at this particular time by the T&GWU officialdom probably has to do with the intransigent opposition expressed by Fryer, Thornett, and the other left-wing leaders at Cowley to the layoff and speed-up plans announced recently by Leyland chief executive Michael Edwardes. The "Edwardes plan" involves "a gradual reduction in the number of workers required to produce a given number of vehicles." This will mean the closing of some plants and the elimination of 12,500 jobs in 1978 and thousands more in 1979 and 1980.

At a meeting of 250 union officials and 400 Leyland management representatives on February 1 (part of Leyland's "participation" scheme to involve the union apparatus more directly in implementing the layoffs), Bob Fryer was among the very few unionists to speak out against these moves.

The T&GWU bureaucracy fears that Cowley will become a focal point for a challenge by Leyland workers to the Edwardes plan. Management has fully cooperated in the attack on the Cowley militants, refusing to recognize Thornett as deputy convenor.

Alan Thornett has been a shop steward at the Cowley plant for sixteen years. Last year he ran a national campaign on a class-struggle platform for president of the T&GWU.

Thornett is also a central leader of the Workers Socialist League, a Trotskyist group that arose out of the expulsion of 200 members from Gerry Healy's Workers Revolutionary Party in 1974. □

The Coalisland Conference Against Repression

By Brian Lyons and Ailean O'Callaghan

COALISLAND, Northern Ireland—Approximately 800 persons attended the Conference Against Repression here on January 22. Organised by the Coalisland Relatives' Action Committee (RAC), the conference attracted a wide spectrum of political, legal, and community organisations.

The twenty or so organisations participating included the Provisional Sinn Féin, the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA), the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), the newly formed Irish Independence Party (IIP), the Socialist Labour Party (SLP), and various organisations of the far left in Ireland, such as the People's Democracy (PD), the Movement for a Socialist Republic (MSR—Irish section of the Fourth International), and the Independent Socialist Party. Invitations were sent to Loyalist organisations, which declined to attend.

Although the conference was not given a great deal of national publicity beforehand, there was a broad geographic representation. Participants came from areas as far apart as Dublin and Cork in the South, and Newry and Derry in the North.

The conference took place against a background of a gradual change in the Irish political scene. This shift has been marked in the North by the development of the RACs' agitation for the immediate restoration of political status to prisoners sentenced since March 1, 1977,¹ and a ground-swell of protest against torture. In the South, it has been marked by the resounding defeat of the Fine Gael-Labour coalition government in the June 1977 elections.

For three or four years preceding this turn in the situation, the anti-imperialist movement had been steadily pushed back, while the British and their Loyalist allies reinforced their positions. In particular, the mass anti-imperialist movement that characterised the resistance in the North between 1968 and 1972 had disintegrated, and from 1972 onwards the military campaign of the Provisionals became the predominant element in the picture. In the South also, popular struggles had declined and the coalition government was in a position where it could collaborate directly with Westminster in introducing a series of draconian laws.

With the Loyalist strike in 1974, the

Conference Supports Call for Tribunal

As part of its effort to help build a mass movement against repression, the Coalisland conference appealed for worldwide support to the International Tribunal on Britain's Presence in Ireland.

The following resolution was passed unanimously by the conference:

"Since the European Court has relinquished its responsibility for indicting the British government for its crimes in

Ireland, the Coalisland conference appeals to the international community at large and all its organizations to support the call for an 'International Tribunal on Britain's Presence in Ireland,' sponsored, among others, by the National Executive of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union.

"We ourselves resolve to help organize both evidence and witnesses to present testimony to the Tribunal when it is convened."

strategy of British imperialism, as originally outlined in the Sunningdale agreement,² had reached an impasse. Thenceforward Westminster relied less upon political integration of the oppressed minority into the six-county statelet and more upon direct repression to smash the resistance.

The effect of this was to cut off the negotiating hand of the SDLP, which, along with the Fianna Fáil party in the South, suddenly rediscovered the "Irish dimension"³ in an attempt to improve its bargaining position with British imperialism. While designed to head off the reviving anti-imperialist feeling of the Catholic masses, the effect of this shift by the Irish bourgeois nationalist parties is contradictory in that it can also serve as a stimulus to the slumbering discontent of the Irish people.

The double-edged effect of this turn was registered most clearly in the local government elections of May 1977, when the SDLP made significant gains almost exclusively in areas like the Turf Lodge neighborhood of Belfast, where the new militancy was first expressed in the streets.

The main issue around which street mobilisations have taken place recently

has been the plight of the prisoners. For their refusal to accept anything less than their right to political status, hundreds of republican and socialist prisoners have been denied the rights accorded to even the pettiest of common-law offenders.

Some 282 members of the Provisionals (average age seventeen to twenty years) and 23 members of the Irish Republican Socialist Party (average age twenty-three to twenty-six), plus uncounted members of other anti-imperialist organisations today lie in unheated cells, naked but for a single blanket.

It is the relatives of these prisoners (in the main, women) who have come together in RACs to fight the repression in general but particularly to defend the thousands of members of their families imprisoned in Long Kesh, Crumlin Road, and the Armagh Women's Prison.

The RACs today are the most important expression of mass resistance to the British occupation and have scored some important successes, most notably the part they played in the demonstration on August 10, 1977, of 20,000 persons against the Silver Jubilee visit of the British monarch, popularly referred to here as the "Queen of Death."

Until recently, however, the resistance remained relatively isolated from the anti-Unionist population as a whole. Despite their hard work, the RACs were unable to mobilise much more than the relations of political prisoners and the hard-core activists of the republican movement and the left. This was sufficient to keep the issue of repression in the public eye but was not enough to score any major victories.

The Conference Against Repression was

1. Political status was abolished for prisoners sentenced after this date.—IP/I

2. This agreement provided for inclusion of representatives of the SDLP in the executive of a local Northern Ireland government. This was called "power sharing."

3. The Sunningdale agreement also recognised the Dublin regime's right to an interest in Northern Ireland and projected a vague perspective for more all-Ireland cooperation. This was called "the Irish dimension."

called in an attempt to end the isolation of the resistance and extend it as a mass campaigning movement on a six-county basis. The conference itself was a measure of the growth of resistance to Britain's repressive operation, in that it followed closely on the heels of the torture of a sixty-four-year-old Coalisland farmer, Peter McGrath. It was this incident that gave birth to the RAC in Coalisland. And through the persistent efforts of the participants in this committee, the opportunity was created to extend the fight-back against repression beyond the traditional areas for support.

The turnout for the conference far exceeded even the most optimistic expectations of the organisers. Besides reflecting the general turn in the political situation in Ireland itself, the attendance was probably boosted considerably by the shock of the European Court's acquittal of the British government on the charge of torture.

The court's decision was the focus of the first speaker at the conference, Father Faul, who discussed the general question of torture. A veteran fighter against repression, Father Faul noted that Britain was found guilty of "inhuman and degrading treatment." Nonetheless, he castigated the European Court's verdict for giving a definition of torture that he said "was impossibly high" and provided a green light for torturers throughout the world to practice their profession with a minimum of restriction by international legislation or convention.

Following some discussion on this subject, the conference voted unanimously to condemn all forms of torture and repression.

Despite the vast array of political tendencies within the conference, sectarianism was reduced to a minimum. It was particularly encouraging to see different sections of the republican movement, who had been engaged in deadly feuds, now participating in the same conference and voting for common action. This reflected an overwhelming desire for unity by the majority of participants, many of whom had drifted out of the struggle since 1972-73.

In keeping with the spirit of the conference, the organisers urged from the outset that all speakers refrain from direct attacks upon rival organisations. The conference approved some organisational measures to enforce this appeal but these proved unnecessary, in view of the evident desire of most of the participants to work together.

Such unity did not exclude political debate. In fact, as the conference progressed, it became increasingly apparent that there were some basic differences over how to carry the struggle forward.

Along with some delegates from the Irish Republican Socialist Party (IRSP), the Provisionals argued that repression

and torture could only be ended by "winning the war of liberation." According to Gerry Brannigan from the Belfast Executive of Provisional Sinn Féin, the "apparatus" was already there for conducting the



G.M. Cookson/Socialist Challenge
BERNADETTE (DEVLIN) McALISKEY: "We need to involve the thousands of other people outside this hall."

war, and he gave the conference the simple choice of using it or not.

"What will you do," asked Brannigan, "when you get 50,000 or even 100,000 people on the streets and nothing happens, the army is still there to stop you?" This was coupled with the claim that it was not the mass civil-rights movement that toppled Stormont in 1972 but the military campaign of the Provisionals. The conclusion to be drawn from this was fairly obvious, and was perhaps summarised most clearly by one speaker who claimed that in Ireland today "there is only one people, one party, and one army."

This was the first time in many years that there had been the possibility to conduct such a debate before a broad audience. In fact, even during the high point of the anti-imperialist struggle represented by the existence of the "no-go" areas [Catholic neighborhoods from which the police had been driven—IP/I], there was no real forum for contending political lines to be placed openly in front of the Catholic masses for discussion.

Instead the different wings of the republican movement at that time pursued a basically sectarian policy of appointing their own organisers, counsellors, and

defence force for the community-controlled areas. Moreover, the left was deeply divided, and all the various groups were equally isolated from the mass movement.

The Coalisland conference represented an important change in both respects. The left is emerging from its isolation with an increasingly common viewpoint on the tasks facing the anti-imperialist struggle.

In a joint leaflet, the PD and the MSR put forward an alternative view to that of the Provisionals:

"Sinn Féin in particular must learn that the Provos' military struggle is only one tactic in the overall struggle against imperialism, and there are many in the North who do not support that tactic but are strongly opposed to British imperialism and its day-to-day manifestations like torture, victimisation of prisoners, etc. The support of these people is vital to success."

Answering the claim that torture and the detention of political prisoners could not be fought within the context of the imperialist occupation, the leaflet also said:

"Again some may argue that these are only symptoms of the overall problem of British rule, but we believe that to build a mass movement where the mass of the people are demoralised or apathetic, it is necessary to select first limited or immediate demands which directly affect the masses and to which they can see readily attainable solutions.

"Winning concessions on these issues then gives the people confidence while the experience of agitation raises their level of consciousness."

The ability of the PD and MSR to produce a joint assessment and perspective for the Irish struggle is a result of the fusion process between the two organisations but also reflects a growing convergence of views within other sections of the Irish left.

Thus the keynote speech of the conference was delivered by Michael Farrell of the PD. Along with Bernadette (Devlin) McAliskey, Farrell is probably one of the most articulate representatives of the Irish left. Both were outstanding leaders of the mass civil-rights movement in its most powerful phase. Moreover, despite the isolation of the last five years, they have benefited from the process of rethinking that has taken place.

Drawing upon the wealth of experience gained during the last ten years, Farrell explained the inevitable fear and distrust between different political currents within a united front movement. He emphasised, however, that repression has an iron logic of its own that revolutionists, republicans, and reformists alike could ignore at their peril: "Repression does not only affect the rights of revolutionaries and republicans," he said, "but threatens the democratic rights of *all* working people and *all* their organisations, including the reformists."

On this basis, unity in action was not

only possible but vitally necessary:

"Unity cannot be built around ultimate solutions, since these are what divide us into our separate organisations. It is possible to debate these differences, but within the context of agreement around what unites us—our opposition to torture and repression, our agreement on political status for the prisoners."

Although united action with the leadership of the SDLP does not seem likely for the foreseeable future, Farrell's emphasis on the need for a policy of nonexclusion was useful in that it established the mass orientation of the antirepression movement and anticipated the objections of the Provisionals.

The view of the Provisionals is that the anti-imperialist struggle long ago transcended the boundaries of mass action. The limit supposedly was marked by the Bloody Sunday massacre in Derry in January 1972, when British paratroopers opened fire on a civil rights demonstration, killing thirteen persons. Therefore, the agreement of the Provisionals with any form of mass protest is strictly subordinate to their military campaign. This attitude was expressed, for example, in the January 14, 1978, issue of *Republican News*, a Belfast weekly that reflects the Provisionals' point of view:

"Only the present courageous armed struggle of IRA volunteers planting bombs against the British presence, of people in the six counties [of Northern Ireland] resisting repression, of the Republican

People in the 26 counties [of the formally independent part of the country] providing support and the propaganda back-up, can force the British out of Ireland. . . ."

This attitude is coupled with the idea that the treacherous role of the bourgeois nationalist parties, particularly the SDLP, has already been exposed, and that joint action with these parties would only provide them with an electoral platform. Paradoxically, this view is held at the same time as the Provisionals are feeling the pressure from the shift in the bourgeois nationalists' posture.

Summing up the main discussion at the conference, Bernadette McAliskey warned of the danger of being intoxicated with the limited success of the Coalisland congress:

"The people inside this hall are not new to one another. We are the children of '68. Most of us have been through the experience of the civil-rights movement and have attained a higher level of consciousness because of that.

"We need to involve the thousands of other people outside this hall, to bring them through the same experiences and give them confidence to struggle."

McAliskey discussed the role of a vanguard movement and the danger of its isolation from the mass movement as a whole. This is one of the principal lessons to be learned from the past ten years of struggle, she said, and its incorporation into the arsenal of the Irish left augurs well for the future.

Until recently the left in Ireland re-

mained more or less static with little opportunity for growth or even dialogue with the many fine militants who form part of the republican movement. When the door seemed to open for discussion and development of a revolutionary perspective for Ireland, it was almost immediately slammed shut again by an intense period of armed conflicts among republican groups.

While the Irish left is still numerically weak, the role of the socialist movement at the Coalisland conference confirmed that it is entering a new stage. The fusion between the PD and the MSR is part of a general process of clarification and regroupment manifested not least of all by the formation recently of the SLP in the South [representing a left split from the Irish Labour Party—IP/I].

Although the Independent Socialist Party, of which Bernadette McAliskey is a member, did not collaborate directly with the MSR and the PD at the conference, its resolution had a great deal in common with that of the other two groups, indicating that the possibility exists for fruitful collaboration in the future. The role of McAliskey was itself a model for the far left as a whole.

The conference also afforded the opportunity for militant republicans to hear the left viewpoint firsthand and discuss it concretely in relation to specific proposals for action. From this angle, the conference was also a test of the flexibility of the



Part of march of 1,200 in London January 29 commemorating sixth anniversary of deaths of fourteen civil-

rights demonstrators gunned down by British troops in Northern Ireland on Bloody Sunday 1972.

S. Paul/Intercontinental Press-Inprecor

Provisionals and their openness to political change.

As the first attempt to build a united movement against repression, the conference registered an important gain for the anti-imperialist struggle as a whole. There were inevitable organisational difficulties and lack of precision in working out future actions, but these were far outweighed by

the tremendous enthusiasm at the prospect of a united movement. All but one resolution were passed by an overwhelming majority. In particular, the conference called for a six-county-wide action on the first Sunday in March, which has been designated "Prisoners Day." This will be followed by a coordinated campaign to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the

civil-rights movement in October.

This and similar activity is aimed at rebuilding the kind of mass movement in the streets that existed in 1968-72. If the objectives it set itself are carried out, the Coalisland conference will constitute an important political milestone in the decade-long struggle that has followed the rebirth of the fight for freedom in 1968. □

A Civilian Regime to Appease the Masses?

Peru—'Democratic' Election on Military's Drawing Board

By Fred Murphy

Facing severe economic difficulties and rising discontent with its arbitrary rule, the Peruvian military government announced a plan last July for gradually restoring civilian rule, while retaining veto power over the eventual new government.

A constituent assembly charged with preparing a new constitution is to be elected on June 4 of this year. General elections will be held sometime in 1980; only after that will a civilian regime take over.

The military's master plan for this transition, published last October, stipulates that the new constitution must "institutionalize the fundamental structural reforms of the revolutionary process."¹ Should the assembly fail to meet the junta's specifications, President Francisco Morales Bermúdez has warned, "the government of the armed forces will dissolve the assembly and that will be the end of the story."

Besides this standing threat of a military veto over its decisions, the constituent assembly will be undemocratic in other ways. Almost 3 million persons—mostly peasants—who cannot read or write are to be denied suffrage. ("To be illiterate is to be more easily manipulated," according to Interior Minister Luis Cisneros.)

Dozens of leftist political leaders, including the well-known Trotskyist Hugo Blanco, remain in forced exile abroad. The government steadfastly refuses to allow them to return to participate in the elections. And the military also continues to exercise control over the major communications facilities in the country, including the major daily newspapers.

Despite all these restrictions, the call for

constituent assembly elections has been accompanied by a change in the political atmosphere in Peru. It has touched off a rise in political activity among both bourgeois and working-class sectors.

Let us look at the various political forces in the country and the positions they are taking in the new situation.

The Bourgeois Parties

Partido Aprista Peruano (PAP—Peruvian Aprista² Party). The PAP was founded in 1930 by Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre. During its early years, the Aprista movement had a revolutionary nationalist outlook. It urged the political and economic unification of Latin America against imperialist domination.

Although he was attracted to the Russian revolution in the beginning, Haya de la Torre chose the path of building a multiclass organization similar to Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang. Over the years Haya and the PAP moved more and more to the right, a process that culminated in support for the Prado regime in the 1950s. While formally retaining its program of bourgeois-nationalist reforms, the PAP is today a reactionary, anticommunist outfit.

Although it was for many years, and probably still is, the largest single political force in Peru and has held a parliamentary majority at various times, the PAP has never governed. Haya de la Torre has won presidential elections on two occasions, only to be thwarted from taking office by military coups.

Despite a long-standing feud between

the Apristas and the armed forces, the PAP stands alone today among Peruvian political parties in supporting the military's electoral scheme. There has thus been speculation of a deal between Morales Bermúdez and the eighty-four-year-old Haya de la Torre to guarantee a PAP victory in June.

The government has denied the rumors. Haya, on the other hand, has admitted meeting privately with Morales, and has credited the president with overcoming the antagonisms between the PAP and the military. A growing number of Apristas have been appointed to key administrative posts, replacing ousted leftists who were given jobs under the Velasco government when the military was seeking to co-opt radicals.

The PAP calls for "unity of all Peruvians" to solve the economic crisis. (Or at least most Peruvians—Haya recently expressed opposition to a full amnesty for exiles, saying this would allow "subversive elements" back into the country.)

Partido Acción Popular (AP—People's Action Party). The AP arose out of Fernando Belaúnde Terry's unsuccessful presidential campaign in 1956. Belaúnde won the 1962 elections with his new party, which was consciously modeled on the PAP—even to the point of taking the same acronym.

The AP is the second largest bourgeois party in Peru, but it remains fundamentally Belaúnde Terry's personal vehicle for regaining the presidency, which he lost in Velasco's 1968 coup. His party is more directly linked to big Peruvian and imperialist capital than is the PAP, and is less enthusiastic about the military's plans for insuring partial continuation of Velasco's "revolutionary process."

Belaúnde Terry says he wants immediate general elections and the restoration of the 1930 constitution. He has said the constituent assembly "cannot coexist with a de facto [military] government." During a recent visit to Peru (he now spends much

1. A reference to the bourgeois-nationalist measures (nationalizations of some major industries and a limited land reform) carried out under Gen. Juan Velasco Alvarado from 1968 to 1975. Some of these steps have already been reversed under the Morales Bermúdez regime. See *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*, January 23, p. 81.

2. "Aprista" refers to the Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana (APRA—People's Revolutionary American Alliance). It was formed in 1924 in Mexico by Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre, who was then a revolutionary student leader in forced exile. Local branches of APRA were set up by Haya's followers in various Latin American cities. Only the Peruvian organization survived, and today the names APRA and PAP are used interchangeably.

of his time in the United States), Belaúnde claimed that the navy disagreed with Morales's plans. This touched off speculation that he was seeking to foment a coup.

Unión Nacional (National Union). Until recently, this party was called the *Unión Nacional Odrista*. It is an ultraright outfit composed of the followers of the late dictator Manuel Odría, who ruled Peru from 1948 to 1956.

Movimiento Democrático Peruano (MDP—Peruvian Democratic Movement). This party has also undergone a change of names. The "P" once stood for Pradista, after Manuel Prado, who ruled as a dictator from 1939 to 1945. Prado returned to power as a duly-elected president in 1956, with the support of the Apristas.

Partido Democrático Reformista Peruano (PDRP—Peruvian Reformist Democratic Party). Another party made up of followers of a former dictator: Augusto Leguía, who ruled Peru intermittently from 1908 until 1930. His daughter, Carmen Leguía, is the leading figure in the PDRP.

Partido Popular Cristiano (PPC—Christian People's Party). Headed by former Lima Mayor Luis Bedoya Reyes, the PPC grew out of a 1967 split in the Christian Democracy. Bedoya has echoed Belaúnde Terry's views on the elections, and recently expressed admiration for the economic policies of General Pinochet in Chile.

Democracia Cristiana (DC—Christian Democracy). The Peruvian Christian Democrats have a leftist aura acquired through their association with radical elements in the Catholic Church and their support for Velasco's "revolution." Their most prominent figure, Héctor Cornejo Chávez, held high posts under Velasco.

Although its influence has been reduced in recent years through internal divisions and the loss of the government posts its cadres had held, the DC is at present being wooed by the Communist Party as a potential coalition partner.

Partido Socialista Revolucionaria (PSR—Revolutionary Socialist Party). The PSR was formed in 1976 by a number of leftist military officers and other figures purged from the armed forces after Velasco's fall. Among its top leaders are the former chief of the Lima military region, Gen. Leonidas Rodríguez, and Gen. Arturo Valdez Palacio, who was in charge of drawing up the Velasco regime's legislation on nationalized property. Rodríguez also once headed SINAMOS,³ the Velasco government's abortive attempt to set up a mass organization to support its policies.

While the PSR has achieved influence among some working-class and peasant sectors, it is fundamentally a bourgeois-

nationalist party. Its program calls for a "democratic people's government" that would continue the reforms initiated under Velasco, with increased "participation" by the masses.

Trade Unions, Peasant Organizations, and Working-Class Parties

The electoral law promulgated by the junta allows peasant and labor organizations, as well as political parties, to present candidates for the constituent assembly.

In early December the miners union, the FNTMMP,⁴ issued a call for "maintaining political and class independence on all levels of struggle," and asked that "union, peasant, neighborhood, democratic, progressive, and political organizations" join in forming a broad front that would raise the demands of the masses in the elections.

This call was quickly endorsed by a number of political groups to the left of the Communist Party, including the Trotskyists of the FIR, the PST, and the POMR.⁵ It is to the initial bloc that formed around the miners' call that Hugo Blanco refers in his "Letter to My People," which appears below.

Differences arose in this bloc, however; principally over what stand to take toward the bourgeois-nationalist military officers and the PSR. It divided into two currents that subsequently formed the FOCEP and the UPDI:

Frente Obrero, Campesino, Estudiantil, y Popular (FOCEP—Workers, Peasants, Students, and Popular Front). FOCEP's initial declaration, issued December 17, was signed by a number of local trade-union organizations, representing miners, metalworkers, bank workers, public employees, and the SIDERPERU steelworkers;⁶ by peasant organizations in Yanahuanca and Pasco; by several class-struggle trade-union tendencies; by three socialist youth organizations; by the POMR and the PST; by the well-known labor attorneys Genaro Ledesma and Laura Caller; and by Trotskyist leaders Hugo Blanco, Ricardo Napurí, Hernán Cuentas, and Francisco Montes.

These forces declare that they are "inter-

vening in the elections because the working class must not leave the way open for the parties of the bourgeoisie and the military hierarchy . . . ; and also to open to the Peruvian people their own political perspective, against all the collaborationist variants that seek to drag the working class and the oppressed masses in behind the bourgeois cart."

FOCEP's declaration calls for a "worker-peasant majority" in the constituent assembly, and outlines a program of demands that includes the following:

- Across-the-board wage increases corresponding to the actual rise in the cost of living. . . .
- Cancellation of the agrarian debt that the peasants suffer. . . .
- repudiation of the foreign debt. . . .
- expropriation of imperialist enterprises without compensation, under workers control. . . .
- Dissolution of the repressive bodies—the army and the police. . . .
- A break with the Organization of American States. Repudiation of the political and military treaties that cut across national sovereignty.

Unidad Popular de Izquierda (UPDI—Popular Unity of the Left). The forces that came together around the UPDI include the miners federation FNTMMP and a number of groups and individuals that have been evolving away from Maoism toward class-struggle positions. The most significant among these are the *Izquierda Popular* (Popular Left) and one faction of the *Vanguardia Revolucionaria* (Revolutionary Vanguard) led by Ricardo Letts. Letts and two other members of the editorial board of the weekly Lima magazine *Marka* signed the UPDI declaration, as did the Trotskyists of the FIR and the FIR-CL.⁷

The UPDI was less clear on the question of class independence than the FOCEP. It called for "popular unity of the whole left" against the "reactionary camp headed by APRA, Acción Popular, and the PPC and allied with the military government." At the same time, it emphasized that "what is fundamental is the revolutionary mobilization of the masses for their interests as workers, peasants, and people."

The UPDI fused in late January with a third coalition, the UDP:

Unión Democrática Popular (Democratic People's Union). This bloc was initiated by five of the more orthodox Peruvian Maoist groups—the PCR, the VR(ML,PMT), the MIR(VR), the MIR(VR,CE), and the MAP.⁸

It was later joined by a third faction of the MIR headed by Ricardo Gadea, who was well known as a guerrilla leader in the 1960s.

The UDP called for establishing an "authentic people's democracy" that would "make Peru a truly independent country."

The UDP was also supported by the

4. Federación Nacional de Trabajadores Mineros y Metalúrgicos del Perú (National Federation of Miners and Metalworkers of Peru).

5. Frente de Izquierda Revolucionaria (Front of the Revolutionary Left), Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (Socialist Workers Party), Partido Obrero Marxista Revolucionario (Revolutionary Marxist Workers Party). The FIR and PST are sympathizing groups of the Fourth International. The POMR shares the views of the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International.

6. SIDERPERU is the state-owned steel complex at Chimbote. For a report on the recent victorious fifty-two-day strike by the SIDERPERU workers, see *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*, February 27, p. 230.

7. Frente de Izquierda Revolucionaria—Cuarta Internacional (Front of the Revolutionary Left—Fourth International), a sympathizing group of the Fourth International.

3. Sistema Nacional de Apoyo a la Movilización Social (National Network for Supporting Social Mobilization).



Marka

LIMA, November 1977: Trade-union rally of 25,000 demands democratic rights, end to austerity.

Confederación Campesina del Perú (CCP—Peruvian Peasants Federation). The CCP was once the main national peasants organization and still retains influence in some areas, but under the Velasco regime it lost much of its support to the government-initiated Confederación Nacional Agraria (CNA—National Agrarian Federation).

The CNA was originally set up as a means of bringing the peasant movement under the government's thumb. But since Velasco's ouster it has participated in struggles against the regime. Nevertheless (or perhaps as a result), the CNA was ruled ineligible to present candidates for the constituent assembly on the grounds that it is a government agency.

The CNA's present leadership holds views similar to those of the PSR.

Confederación General de Trabajadores

8. Partido Comunista—Revolucionaria (Communist Party—Revolutionary), Vanguardia Revolucionaria (Marxista-Leninista, Pensamiento Mao Tsetung) (Revolutionary Vanguard [Marxist-Leninist, Mao Tsetung Thought]), Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria (Voz Rebelde) (Revolutionary Left Movement [Rebel Voice]), Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria (Voz Rebelde—Cuarta Etapa) (Revolutionary Left Movement [Rebel Voice—Fourth Stage]), Movimiento de Acción Proletaria (Proletarian Action Movement).

Peruanos (CGTP—General Federation of Peruvian Workers). The CGTP is the main trade-union federation in the country and is controlled by the Communist Party. Its national assembly in December voted to field a CGTP slate in the elections, however, and called for a "broad, anti-imperialist, antioligarchic, and democratic front."

FOCEP hailed this decision of the biggest workers organization in Peru and urged the CGTP leadership to join in discussions on how to further working-class unity against the bourgeoisie's government and political parties.

But the Stalinist leaders of the CGTP had a different kind of unity in mind. Isidoro Gamarra of the CGTP said in an interview with *Marka* published January 12 that besides certain workers parties, other unions, and peasant organizations, the "broad front" could include the PSR, the Christian Democrats and "other parties with good intentions."

Gamarra and Eduardo Castillo, another top CGTP bureaucrat, announced January 30 that the union federation had formed an electoral bloc with the Movimiento al Socialismo Peruano (MASP—Peruvian Movement Toward Socialism), a petty-bourgeois party with reformist positions. This bloc, called the Frente Popular (Popular Front), also was to include the CNT,⁹ (a Christian-Democratic union federation)

and the Popular Union of Peruvian Women.

But the Electoral Commission of the CGTP National Council issued a statement the next day denying Gamarra's and Castillo's authority to form such a front and dissociating the union federation from it. Neither the CGTP nor the Frente Popular had presented petitions to qualify for ballot status by February 3, the government's deadline.

Partido Comunista Peruana (PCP—Peruvian Communist Party). The PCP gave virtually uncritical support to the government and the armed forces during the years of Velasco Alvarado's rule. When Morales Bermúdez replaced Velasco in a palace coup, the PCP hailed this move as a "deepening of the revolution."

As the Morales government became more openly anti-working-class, the PCP followed a vacillating policy, on some occasions reluctantly giving support to workers' and peasants' struggles—as in the national general strike last July—and at other times seeking a "dialogue" with the military.

Disillusionment with the PCP leadership's line is widespread. This is reflected not only in the growing influence of cen-

9. Central Nacional de los Trabajadores (National Workers Federation).

trist currents to the left of the PCP, but also in deep differences inside the Stalinist party itself.

A "Coordinating Committee of the Regions and the Youth" (CCRJ) is publicly challenging the PCP Political Committee for control of the organization. This opposition claims to represent 90 percent of the party's regional organizations and 95 percent of the youth. It is particularly strong in the CGTP.

The CCRJ charges the Stalinist tops with adopting a "reformist, bourgeois-liquidationist line," placing "excessive confidence in the military left," and bureaucratically violating the party's statutes.

General Secretary Jorge del Prado and his faction of the Political Committee have responded by calling the oppositionists "Trotskyites" and accusing them of links with the police.

In turn, CCRJ leaders affirm their loyalty to "the world Communist movement and its vanguard, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union," and accuse the Political Committee faction of holding "typically Eurocommunist positions."

It is not yet clear how this cold split in the PCP will affect the party's own approach to the elections. But it is likely that the confusion over electoral policy inside the CGTP leadership, and the union federation's failure to achieve ballot status, resulted from the crisis in the PCP.

At present, the PCP is pursuing a popular-front arrangement with the PSR

and the Christian Democrats. These efforts have not yet borne fruit.

Only a few sectarian, ultra-orthodox Maoist groups are calling for a boycott of the constituent assembly elections. Chief among these is the Partido Comunista del Perú (Communist Party of Peru), which publishes *Patria Roja* ("Red Fatherland").

A Revealing Opinion Poll

Besides the range of working-class forces contesting the upcoming elections, the military faces other problems in gradually introducing a civilian bourgeois regime. This was indicated by a poll of eligible voters taken in metropolitan Lima by Catholic University social scientists in mid-December. The results were reported in the January 12 issue of *Marka*.

Of those polled, 92% were aware that elections had been called. Of these, however, 48% thought they would be voting for a new president or a new government.

When asked why the elections were being held, only 3.4% gave the government's official version ("to institutionalize the changes"). Fully 66.2% gave reasons indicating hostility to the government: "erosion of political support" (26.7%); "inability to govern" (13%); "because it cannot solve the economic crisis" (11.1%); and "because of popular pressure" (10.3%).

For a junta that intends to stay in power for two more years after the constituent assembly is elected, these results are not reassuring. □

ces, to improve their organization, their education, and their struggles.

Therefore, it is necessary to take maximum advantage of the government's call for constituent assembly elections.

I have learned that a group of workers parties, union leaders, and well-known socialists intend to take advantage of this opportunity to advance the unity and independence of the working class in political action.

I support this initiative.

According to the reports I have received, these forces are calling for a convention of the workers' political organizations and trade unions, in order to have a democratic discussion on the program and list of candidates that should be presented.

I have also learned that they have pointed out that if these elections are not to be a complete farce, the minimal obligation of the government is to grant immediate freedom to the political prisoners, permit the return of those of us who have been deported, give the fired workers back their jobs, and, most importantly, give illiterates the right to vote. If all these things are not done, the elections will not even have a pretense of being democratic.

I have also been informed that they maintain that it is necessary to use the constituent assembly as one more platform against the government. In fact, the regime is trying to use the constituent assembly to gain a pretense of legitimacy for its remaining in power.

What these forces are doing seems very positive to me, and I think the correct thing to do is to form committees throughout the country to support this initiative.

I am referring to the front formed by the POMR, the FIR-IV, the PST, a sector of the VR, the Izquierda Popular,* workers' leaders such as the leaders of the miners and the fishermen, and others.

I call on all the people's organizations, on all the exploited of Peru, to collaborate in this effort.

I will support the list of candidates chosen by the workers' organizations. And as a principle that cannot be negotiated, I will continue to defend the program of revolutionary Marxism, which calls for class independence, a democratic workers government to build socialism, and for a world socialist revolution.

Unity of all the workers, of all the exploited!

No alliance with the bosses, no matter how "progressive" their mask!

Hugo Blanco
New York, December 16, 1977

Hugo Blanco's 'Letter to My People'

[The following is an open letter issued in New York December 16 by exiled Peruvian peasant leader Hugo Blanco. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

* * *

To my people:

In recent years imperialism and the national bourgeoisie have carried out a brutal economic attack against the masses, lowering their standard of living to a miserable level.

To silence the just protests of the people they have used all forms of repression at their disposal: suspension of constitutional guarantees, imposition of a curfew, abrogation of freedom of the press and the right to strike, firing of workers, mass arrests, deportations, murder, and other such methods.

The main representative of the exploiters and the main instrument of economic and

political repression has been a military government never chosen by the people and whose authority rests solely on the force of arms.

Despite all the repression, the working people have shown their capacity to mount valiant and tenacious resistance against this offensive. By their heroic struggles, they have forced the hangmen to retreat somewhat, and have regained a small part of the democratic rights that are due them. For example, the military government has been forced to lift its suspension of constitutional guarantees of individual rights, the curfew, some of the restrictions on press freedom, and so on.

The calling of elections for a constituent assembly is a result of the struggle of the masses. The exploiters are trying to change masks and put on one less dictatorial.

The workers must utilize every democratic gain they achieve in the course of their battle in order to make further advan-

*Partido Obrero Marxista Revolucionario—Revolutionary Marxist Workers Party; Frente de Izquierda Revolucionaria/Cuarta Internacional—Front of the Revolutionary Left/Fourth International; Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores—Socialist Workers Party; Vanguardia Revolucionaria—Revolutionary Vanguard; Izquierda Popular—Popular Left.

For an End to Phony Dispute Between French CP and SP!

[The following statement by the Political Bureau of the *Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire* (Revolutionary Communist League), the French section of the Fourth International, was issued February 16. We have taken the text from the February 17 issue of *Rouge*. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*.]

* * *

One year ago, in the wake of the municipal elections, the ruling "majority" was beaten, rejected, and condemned by the overwhelming majority of the country. Instead of taking advantage of this opportunity to put an end to the austerity regime, the big working-class parties urged patience. The workers were told they should wait for a victory that would arrive in due course in March 1978, as though the script had been written in advance.

Then, as vacationers returned in September, the machinery broke down. Divisions hardened to the point where millions of workers are now uncertain of the future.

Now Georges Marchais is explaining that if the present parliamentary majority is not beaten in March, it will be the next time. As though time—the months and years—did not matter to the millions of exploited and oppressed in this country.

When we say that today, on the contrary, we must put an end to this system immediately, and that it can be done, we are not being irresponsibly impatient. For as the Barre austerity plan is implemented, it not only feeds discontent but also undermines the strength of the working class. It does this by using massive unemployment to increase divisions between those who have jobs and those who do not, between men and women, old and young, French workers and immigrants, and among regions with uneven levels of development.

Meanwhile, the right is becoming more cocksure and insolent day by day—with rigged votes, reprisals against judges, and J.-J. Servan-Schreiber's racist insults on television.

"This is no longer tolerable. This cannot go on any longer," Georges Marchais is fond of repeating at his rallies. And he is right there. However, without fear of contradicting himself, he is ready to grant a possible extension to those responsible for unemployment and the high cost of living. Why?

The polemic between the CP and SP began over programmatic questions—nationalizations, the wage scale, the minimum wage. Then, following the CP con-

ference in early January, these differences were relegated to the background. We must have at least 21 percent of the vote, the CP leadership said. Then the squabble shifted again to the division of cabinet posts. At present, the discussions are deadlocked over a date. Will the CP and SP hold talks after the first round, on the basis of their relative electoral strengths, as Marchais demands? Or after the second round, to discuss dividing up the cabinet posts to the advantage of the SP, as Mitterrand wants?

On this point, we say firmly that when it comes to beating the right, no blackmail or preconditions are acceptable. Right now, all of the working-class organizations should make a pledge to stand down for one another, for the workers' candidate with the most votes on the first round. To claim that this decision depends upon the outcome of the first round means putting the tactical advantage of one or another party above the interests of the working class as a whole. To make a pledge right now to stand down for one another to beat the right and win a majority of votes for the workers parties means bolstering the confidence of the workers in their own strength, and creating a healthier climate for the necessary debate.

Georges Marchais freely jumbles the question of standing down with that of the government. A pledge to stand down, we repeat, must be made immediately and unconditionally. As for the question of the government, the CP presents it as though its own election results were the best insurance against whatever austerity policy the SP might project.

Our memories are not as short as that. In 1936, 1945, and 1956, the CP did get more than 21 percent, and even more than 25 percent of the vote. It did not use these votes to combat austerity, but instead called on the workers to go back to work, to win the "battle for production" and get the capitalist economy back on its feet, and to vote to give Guy Mollet the funds necessary for the shameful war in Algeria.

The only guarantee available to the workers in the struggle against austerity does not consist in bestowing confidence on anyone. It lies in their mobilization, their organization, their readiness to respond. The lessons of one year of struggle against the Barre plan have been sufficient to teach them that the fine words of Georges Marchais are one thing, and actions are another. It was a year of fragmented days of action, with no central focus, that allowed the austerity measures to be implemented, and wages and jobs to decline.

Now that there is a possibility of putting an end to rule by the Giscard, Barres, and Chiracs, it is as though the parties in which the overwhelming majority of workers place their confidence were backpedaling, running for cover. We say: no more division, no more diversion. The 1968 general strike and ten years of struggle against this regime have shown us that we need to send the "majority" packing and take political power in the interests of the workers.

Together, the CP and SP represent the real majority. They should form a new government without delay. They should take power. They should break with the bourgeoisie.

They should take over the government, but not to administer austerity. The SP has just totaled up the costs of its "common program." It plans to pay for an increase in the minimum wage by taking it out of workers' taxes, without it costing the bosses a cent. The CP condemns austerity at home, but is careful not to condemn the same policy when it is applied by the Italian or Spanish CPs.

We demand a government of the CP and SP that would meet our demands, implement a sliding scale of wages, shorten the work week to thirty-five hours immediately, guarantee jobs for all (women and men), and uphold the rights of women and soldiers.

They should assume governmental power, but not to bow to the dictates of the bourgeoisie. And they should begin by breaking all their pacts and compromises with the exploiters and their agents. The SP is offering a bloc of seats in parliament to the Left Radicals, thus enabling them to wheel and deal as they like without having to answer for it in the plants, where they have no support. The CP, which is so ready to split hairs about questions of program when it comes to standing down for the SP on the second round, raises no programmatic objections about withdrawing its candidates on the first round to make room for the Gaullist Gallet or General Binoche.

It is impossible to claim to be resolutely defending the interests of the workers without breaking all the ties that bind them to the bourgeoisie, without breaking with the Left Radicals or "progressive" Gaullists, without repudiating the NATO alliance, without dumping Giscard and repealing the constitution.

That is what needs to be said, as firmly as possible, at a time when the campaign is bogged down in phony disputes and division. That is what the revolutionary candidates will make it possible to express.

FROM OUR READERS

The only note with the check was the single word "Contrib" penned in the corner, but we knew exactly what it was and will put it to good work in meeting the extra expenses of the combined Intercontinental Press/Inprecor.

The check was for \$100. It came from two long-time supporters in Chicago.

As his contribution, N.F., a well-traveled reader in New York who appreciates the value of accurate, detailed maps, sent us the latest, king-size edition of the Rand McNally *International Atlas*.

The publisher claims the volume sets "a new standard of excellence in world atlases," and after looking it over we are inclined to agree. The 11-by-15 inch compendium contains 312 pages of world maps, pinpointing cities from El Aaiún, Sahara, to Zywiec, Poland.

N.F. said that he preferred to make a donation in this more lasting form "because the value of the dollar is sinking so rapidly!"

Just the same, the plunge of the dollar makes it all the more imperative for us to get dollars. Whatever you can afford—and even if you can't quite afford it—please send in the folding stuff.

G.K. in Oak Park, Illinois, put pen to paper (a checkbook in this case) and asked us to send a six-month gift subscription to introduce a friend to IP/I.

Is this evidence of a movement to spread the Christmas spirit around the year? Or does it fall within the more general context of gift problems and their solution? Our staff is watching with interest for further developments on this front.

S.P. in San Francisco thanked us in advance for taking care of a change of address. She added: "I really like Intercontinental Press/Inprecor—extremely informative."

"I was very happy to read about the coming together of the two publications," S.W. writes from Detroit. "I would be considerably happier if I could read about it in my own copy. But I cannot. The reason is that I have not received any copies of IP since the last week in October 1977.

"As far as I know I have had a valid first-class subscription, having renewed it last summer. Where oh where have my IP's gone? If you check your records and discover that I did have a valid sub all

that time, could you possibly send me all those missing back issues?"

The missing issues are on the way, but S.W. may have to send smoke signals to let us know if they arrived. His original subscription copies, although properly addressed, had been returned to us by the Post Office as "undeliverable."

N.L. in Islington, Ontario, writes: "Because I'm just a student and funds are near non-existent I do not mind receiving IP by 2nd class mail. It's much better than not at all, and not at all would be unbearable because I rely too much on your journal. Especially when preparing to go into discussions in my pol. science classes. After reading IP I feel well armed. . . .

"P.S. Glad to see that you have merged with Inprecor."

Returns are beginning to come in from notices and advertisements for the combined magazine placed in other socialist periodicals. This note came from D.H. in Scarborough, Ontario:

"Please find enclosed \$13.50 to cover 6 months subscription to Intercontinental Press/Inprecor, re your advertisement in 'Socialist Voice.'"

Another gauge of the favorable reception given to the combined Intercontinental Press/Inprecor is the modest increase in bookstore and newsstand sales. Two recent examples:

"Please increase our bundle of I.P./Inprecor to 10," writes Vanguard Bookstore in Edmonton, Alberta.

And from Australia, Pathfinder Press writes, "We would like to increase our regular bundle of IP-I by 20 copies per issue."

Orders also continue to arrive for back volumes of Intercontinental Press as readers take advantage of the opportunity to fill out their subscription files (see ad below).

One of the most recent came from B.L. in Taastrup, Denmark. "I have received the 67/68 volumes of World Outlook/Intercontinental Press—thank you!" he writes.

"I hereby send you a check for \$100 for purchasing the 69, 70, 71 and 72 back files of Intercontinental Press."

"Enclosed paper 'Holiday' with 'Chaplin' article by Baumann," A.H. writes from London. "May be of interest to you."

After opening the packet we were able to unscramble the cryptic note. The reference

was to the English-language weekly *Holiday*, published in Dacca, Bangladesh.

The February 12 issue, which A.H. sent us, reprints Michael Baumann's article "Charlie Chaplin—Victim of the McCarthyite Witch-hunt," from our January 9 issue.

Another reader called our attention to a recent issue of *Alternate News Service* from Carlton South, Australia, which reprinted "The Split in the Union of the Left" by Gerry Foley.

Viewpoint, an English-language weekly in Lahore, Pakistan, reprinted a few months ago Joseph Hansen's article "Questions Left Unanswered in Teng, Vance Secret Talks."

R.G. of Jennings, Missouri, writes: "I find your news magazine most informative. I especially appreciate the index which is published with the last issue this year. Because of this index I find it useful to keep all issues of your publication because I can relocate articles quickly when I need to do so.

"Recently I loaned a copy of your March 21, 1977, issue to a friend who managed to lose it. Is it possible to get a copy of that one issue? What is the cost? . . .

"I especially enjoy the book reviews by George Novack. I would like to see more of them."

We can supply back issues for any recent year. The cost for single issues is 75 cents (30p in Britain and Ireland).

"Having read two issues of your weekly, Intercontinental Press, I am very much impressed by the range and quality of their content," a new reader informs us.

"My problem is how to get it regularly here in Nigeria.

"Please could you send me details for air—and ordinary—mail subscriptions."

The information is on the way.

Still Available Complete Back Files (Unbound) Intercontinental Press

| | | |
|------|-------------------------|------|
| 1967 | 42 issues (1,072 pages) | \$25 |
| 1968 | 44 issues (1,176 pages) | \$25 |
| 1969 | 43 issues (1,152 pages) | \$25 |
| 1970 | 43 issues (1,120 pages) | \$25 |
| 1971 | 45 issues (1,128 pages) | \$25 |
| 1972 | 47 issues (1,448 pages) | \$25 |
| 1973 | 46 issues (1,520 pages) | \$25 |
| 1974 | 47 issues (1,888 pages) | \$25 |
| 1975 | 47 issues (1,888 pages) | \$35 |
| 1976 | 49 issues (1,888 pages) | \$35 |
| 1977 | 48 issues (1,456 pages) | \$35 |

P.O. Box 116
Varick Street Station
New York, N.Y. 10014